THE BUNYAN COUNTRY

CHARLES G. HARPER

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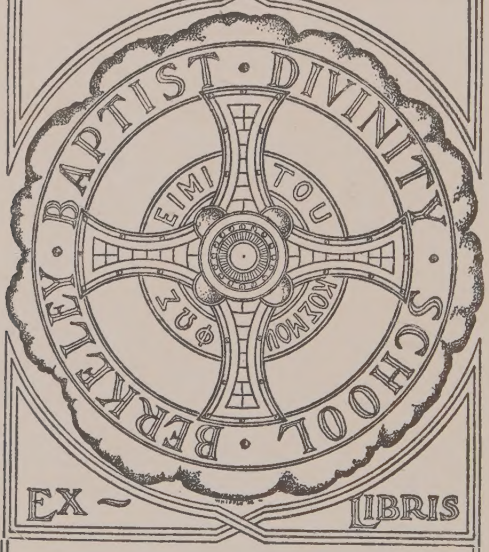

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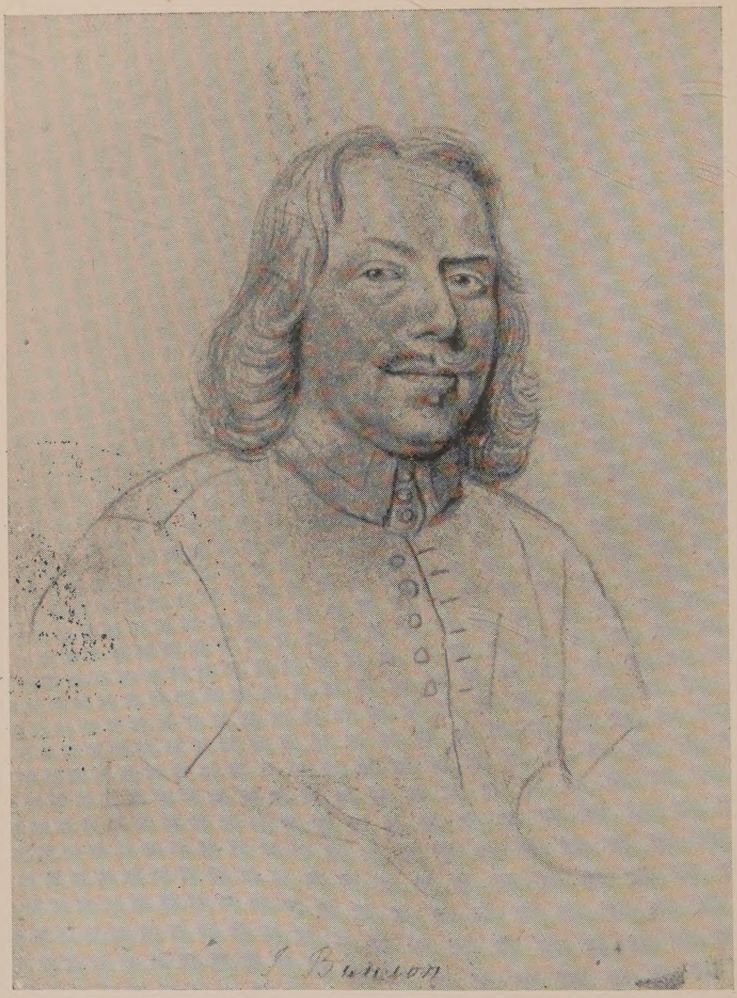

JOHN BUNYAN.
From the pencil drawing by Robert White.

THE BUNYAN COUNTRY

Landmarks of *The Pilgrim's Progress*

By CHARLES G. HARPER

Illustrated by the Author and
from old-time prints and pictures

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THE BUNYAN COUNTRY

INTRODUCTION

AMONG those classics in the English language which are most widely prized, and still keep their place in the affections of innumerable readers, *The Pilgrim's Progress* occupies a foremost place. Cynically it has been said that the " classics " are those works which are never read. The modest grain of truth secreted in that sweeping statement does in no sense apply to Bunyan's immortal allegory ; for since it first was published, in 1678, it has eagerly been read by all sorts and conditions of men. It has been printed in almost every known language and has thus attained to a

truly world-wide fame. Its appeal is alike to children and to all forms of religious belief. On this universal favour it stands next to the Bible itself.

It always has been a matter for astonishment that one such as John Bunyan, of humble antecedents and very little school education, should have had the capacity to write an allegory of such enthralling interest and of a literary merit so great; that he should have at his command a style of writing which is a model at once of grace and simplicity, of a limpid clarity and a downright forthrightness.

We know he never mastered the art of spelling, for the early editions of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, rushed through the press, obviously in great haste, have page after page of what we would call "misprints" did we not know that the printers "followed copy" so literally that they did not stay to correct the author's variances from accepted orthography.

Bunyan was a peasant. We can see so much, even if we did not already know it, in the homely colloquialisms in the early editions of that great work of imagination; such rustic turns of speech, for example, as "I should a been," "let's go over," and "beknownst." But apart from these occasional rusticities, he is master of a style which transcends what commonly we call "style" in literature, for it is natural and unconscious. It is the pure English which emerged from the uncouth beginnings of Chaucer and Gower with the stately and yet simple prose written by William Tyndale, to whom we owe the first English translation of the New Testament in 1526 and the Old Testament of some years later. That, in greater part, is the English of the Bible as Bunyan read it, and as we read it to-day.

Reading in the works of the writers of that age,

we find they all used, without apparent effort, an English of the purest style. It seems to have been their birthright. The poets of the Restoration, Lovelace, Suckling, Herrick, Waller, the Earl of Rochester, wrote the loveliest of lyrics; just as Shakespeare before them had risen to heights of declamatory verse to which none since have attained, as for example in the Duke of Burgundy's lament over the ravages of war in the fair fields of France, in *Henry the Fifth*. Bunyan himself tells us he had little schooling. He says he never studied Plato; nor should we imagine that he had. In so saying he does not merely state an obvious fact; the intention is to have a throw at the University men and those doctors of divinity whom, without the learning of the colleges, he easily could confute. But we know from the internal evidence of some among Bunyan's own poetic efforts that although those who visited him at his modest dwelling in St. Cuthbert's, Bedford, found all his library consisted of the Bible and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, he must needs have read and admired Shakespeare.

All his reading was in these and the great dramatist with whom he so nearly was contemporary. The English language had become formed into an expressive and elastic tongue capable of expressing every emotion and delicate shade of thought. It was literary, as well as natural, and it had not yet become over-rich, like a Christmas plum-pudding, with alien ingredients.

Even the peasant who had come to the art of writing and had some gifts of imagination could, in Bunyan's time, write in an English of which we, in these educated times of our own, do not possess —or at any rate do not exercise—the faculty.

Bunyan was a peasant, and more, a peasant of genius, and one who had suffered, both from internal and external afflictions. His sufferings

of the spirit, in his struggles towards spiritual peace, and the persecutions he endured for conscience' sake served to unseal the fountains of his imagination; and thus we have not only *The Pilgrim's Progress*, but that most affecting of all autobiographies, *Grace Abounding*.

But what, often it is asked, is genius, or what is a genius? Many—some of them geniuses themselves—have sought a right definition, but it has eluded them. We might be inclined to think that only the more commonplace and plodding minds could find it possible to define genius, as does Leslie Stephen, as "the capacity for taking trouble"; except that many to whom the world allows genius have expressed a like opinion. Two distinguished painters, each great in his own especial way—Sir Joshua Reynolds and Hogarth—have said "If you have industry, genius will improve it; if you have none, industry will supply its place"; and "Genius is nothing but labour and diligence." A French saying holds that "Genius is patience," and Buffon described it as "only protracted patience." These definers of genius, themselves sealed of that company, are modest, as true genius should be; but they do not come very near a real definition. Surely the best saying about genius—without actually defining what it is—must be that by Bulwer Lytton, author of so many romantic novels and himself of the company of the superlatively gifted: "Genius does what it must: talent does what it can." Finally, an American definition of characteristic flippancy: "Genius is one-third inspiration and two-thirds perspiration."

Where all others have failed, who then shall presume to say what really is genius? But we well may consider that true genius is not the aptitude to do any one thing supremely well, either by dint of inspiration or long practice. Is not a true

genius one who has a universality of understanding; an inborn aptitude for any employment? There have been, and there are, such. They are not necessarily famous. We most of us have known, in our own private experience, those who can take up any subject and practise it with all the accomplishment of a master. The most famous universal genius (apart from the Admirable Crichton) was the great Sir Francis Bacon, who fell a martyr to the activities of his busy brain, in elucidating the first principles of cold storage on a snowy day of 1626, and thus, by the accident of *anno domini* escaped the accusation of having written Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as well as Shakespeare's plays.

We do not know that Bunyan was one of these universal geniuses. No one has told us that as a brazier and tinker he mended pots and pans supremely well. We do not know anything at all about it; only that, when he wrote and preached so admirably, an astonished and censorious world of opponents twitted him with being "the tinker." As a tinker he might have plied his humble trade during a lifetime, to local admiration, and never have been heard of outside his own Bedfordshire; but for his difficulties of the soul and for that impetus to preach the Gospel he dared not withstand; that compulsion of the conscience which brought him imprisonments and privations and thus incidentally released his dæmon (not the demon of whom he was so mortally afraid) he would have been to-day unknown. But for these can we have any doubt but that he would have remained one of those "mute, inglorious Miltons" of whom the poet Gray writes?

Genius is no prerogative of rank and station. Without the keen, compelling cause that brought Bunyan's genius in preaching and writing to fruition, we have had not a few peasant geniuses.

Burns a century and a half later; Robert Bloomfield, the Suffolk ploughman-poet; John Clare, the Northamptonshire rustic labourer and poet, whose father was in parish relief: all had that divine spark; and in our own day, Thomas Hardy, who it should not be forgotten, was a Dorset peasant, born of Dorset peasants. He owed his style to none. It was as natural as the unenclosed heaths of his native Wessex, and as pagan in its outlook as were the heathens who originally inhabited them.

But all these wrote without any other than narrative or poetic implications. Bunyan's moral and religious motives not merely adorned his tale; they were the reason of it.

A literary equilibrist of our own time has remarked on the sudden and amazing appearance of Puritan feeling in the time of Charles the First. But it was not sudden; it was not amazing; and its beginnings go far back beyond the reign of that unfortunate monarch. Wycliffe, the first of our Bible translators, was our first Puritan, and he died so long ago as 1384. To be a Puritan, apart from the concretions and exasperations that have gathered about the profession, is a noble creed. Like a diamond, it shines the more from amidst the dirt that has been cast upon it. For what is Puritanism but seeking the Scriptures and religion, the things of the next world, as unadulterate as we would like the goods of this life? Wycliffe, then, standing for the purity of the Gospel, and translating it, so that it should be available for the people, struck a first blow for the Reformation. He escaped the malice of Rome and died peacefully as rector of Lutterworth, in 1384. An impotent fury expended itself upon his body, over forty years later, when his coffin was dug up and burnt, and his ashes flung into the river Swift, which is but a brook. Fuller, author

of works on so many "Worthies," wrote with noble eloquence of that deed: "The brook conveyed his ashes to Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean, and thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

With the spread of education, the Bible came into many homes. It was suppressed and burnt time and again; and retranslated into more modern English by Tyndale, who in 1536, in Belgium, suffered martyrdom for his work.

Then came the Reformation in England. The leaven of learning brought into general reach, had accomplished that, and although in the brief but sharp Marian persecution error triumphed once more and the Scriptures were for a time withdrawn, the Gospel truths ever since have been free for those to read who will.

This, however, was but a step in Puritan development. The next was forced by the high Anglican pretensions of the Elizabethan and Jacobean clergy, and the doings of the reactionary Archbishop Laud. Those really were not favourable times for imposing upon people who could read and judge for themselves the outworn mummeries and elaborate ecclesiastical millineries favoured by a sacerdotal class. The result was to hasten on that trend of thought which questioned the right of such a privileged class to exist at all; and saw nothing to warrant the division of believers into two classes: clergy and laity. Thus was Puritanism brought, fully developed, into a world ripe for its reception. History tells us how disastrous then was that clash between the supporters of an Established Church, headed by the King, and his Ministers of State, and the dissenters; and its lessons are plainly to be read: that State affairs and religious beliefs do not accord well in company.

If we are fully to understand the position of Bunyan and of other earnest souls of his time, we must remember that, although a free Bible then was enjoyed, the law as to church—that is parish church—attendance was strict. It was not competent for anyone to declare whether he would or would not attend church. Those who did not were liable to fine or imprisonment, whether they were believers in the services as then conducted, or not. The Independents, the Congregationalists, the Quakers, all, irrespective of their beliefs, suffered this obligation. We know how it affected Bunyan, who had passed through an almost idolatrous reverence for the parish church and everything connected with it, and had come to a conviction that he was irretrievably damned if, having relied upon Gospel truths, he continued to attend the "steeple-house," and did not preach the Gospel. He firmly believed in the stern doctrines of his fellows; and he had an equally firm belief in a real, personal, and terrible devil and his awful activities, and the unquenchable fires of hell awaiting those who sinned against the light. Can we wonder, if fully we enter into comprehension of these views, that Bunyan would rather spend twelve years—say, if needs were, a whole lifetime—in gaol than an eternity of being burnt with the undying fire? Thus it supremely mattered for his eternal welfare that he should refuse to let his conscience be fettered.

Besides these deep-seated convictions, Bunyan, as we read in his *Grace Abounding*, had come through a dreadful time in which he imagined that real, personal devil had a special interest in him. He had escaped the importunities of the fiend, but there he was, all the same: horns and hoofs and tail, with his appropriate habitation. He had that keen interest in Bunyan because he knew how useful a one for the good he hated that this man

could be. The marvellous thing we have here to contemplate is that if the world in Bunyan's time, and for ages before him, believed in the real existence of the Enemy—as certainly it did—of what heroic stuff was mankind, to commit all the deadly sins and to risk becoming the prey of this terrible being?

To-day the devil has become a figure not fit even to frighten children, and hell is discredited; and yet the world is no worse than it was when these were daunting possibilities. There is some innate good in humanity, as well as original sin.

But, logically, if we admit a supernatural religion, there may be an active Evil One, as well as a good. If we like to believe in God and in the angels and in heaven, can we choose, simply because we do not like to believe in them, to deny devils and an infernal region? There is evil as well as good, depth as well as height; there are light and shade, black and white. It will be extremely awkward, to say the least of it, if, not believing in the possibility of the devil and his place, we shall find that, after all, they are realities, and that the burning lake is densely populated with those who have failed, for all their efforts in good works aimed at contracting-out, to escape it.

Bunyan was not concerned at all with literary grace. The thought probably never occurred to him. Sincerity is the note of him. He is eloquent because he is so absolutely sincere, and his style achieves grace because of its direct, effortless simplicity. He was a Puritan in writing as well as in religious thought; though never a Puritan in the political sense. In the Civil War, there flocked to either side, Royalists and Roundheads, besides the sincere partisans, all the malcontents, the ne'er-do-wells, the fanatics, and the scourings of the country, who in those troubles found their

opportunity. Bunyan was not of the category of the spoilers. Torn by his own spiritual troubles and possessed by the injunction to preach what he conceived to be the truth, yet he was no puller-down of churches or breaker of images or stained-glass windows. He was not a republican. He respected authority. He was prepared to render unto Cæsar those things which were Cæsar's, but he would not render up his soul. Specifically he counsels obedience to the King and to those magistrates appointed by him; giving no reproach and suffering all things.

So do we leave this brief exposition of Bunyan's writing, his times and beliefs, to come to a sketch of his life, and to the main purpose of this book: to trace the landmarks of his greatest work, *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

CHAPTER I

The Bunyan Family—John Bunyan: his birth and upbringing—Service in the Army—Spiritual conflict —Joins the Dissenting Church in Bedford

JOHN BUNYAN was born at Elstow, in Bedfordshire, one mile and a half south of the county town of Bedford, in 1628, in the month of October, and was baptized in the parish church, November 30th. His birthplace, in the hamlet of Harrowden, in the meadows to the east of the village, was long since pulled down, and only the grassy site of it is now pointed out.

The Bunyans long were settled in Bedfordshire, being first heard of at Pulloxhill, nine miles south of Elstow, in the twelfth century. Their name was variously spelled, "Buingnan," "Binyan," "Bonion," "Boynon," and "Bunion," before the finally accepted form was adopted. In fact, between thirty and forty variants of the name may by the diligent be traced. The earliest form suggests that they came originally from France, possibly from Brittany, if the often-used terminal forms "ion," or "yon," be considered at all significant, for those forms are constantly met with in that old province of France, alike in personal and place names. It has been held, however, that in old French a "buignon" was a small, raised, round, fruit patty; and that it, the word, is allied to the Italian "bugnon," meaning any small, round object. Hence the English "bunion," a rounded swelling on the foot, with which many people are only too painfully familiar.

The Bunyans of Bedfordshire can be traced back to certain small feudal tenants of the de Albinis,

the Norman lords of Cainhoe Castle, near Pulloxhill.

One of these remote Bunyans, living in the region of Dunstable, was, unfortunately, a smiter and a slayer ; or, if not exactly so in general, he seems to have disliked a certain " clerk "—that is, a priest. Ralph Buingnon, in 1219, slew an unknown priest whose body was found at Totternhoe ; and Ralph was hanged for the crime.

The Bunyans who stayed for a time at Cainhoe and Pulloxhill and remained tenants of the manor when the St. Amands succeeded the de Albinis had no such charges to their discredit. They were yeomen of a good standing. An Elstow family of Bunyan is mentioned in 1199, when one William Buniun is found holding land at Milstead on the manor of the Abbess. In 1327 another William Bunyan is mentioned in documents as of Harrowden, where his famous descendant was born. The next allusion to the family is in 1542 when, the Abbey of Elstow being dissolved and the manor still in the hands of the King, not yet having been granted to the Ratcliffes, one William Bunyan, in common with other tenants of the manor, did homage for the land he held ; a " pightell," that is to say, a meadow, with one messuage or tenement. He had a son, Thomas, who at that time was forty years of age. Six years later, Thomas Bunyan sold some of his small patrimony in Harrowden ; and in a series of years his wife was in trouble at the Manorial Court for the offence—she being a brewer of beer and a baker of bread—of what was styled " breaking the assize " of those articles of daily consumption. That is to say, she charged more for her beer and her bread than the prices fixed by the Court of the Manor. On seven occasions she was fined one penny, and on four others twopence. In 1547 Thomas himself was fined one penny for charging too much for the beer he then was brewing.

We come now to the father of John Bunyan. He, Thomas Bunyan, was born in 1602, and was the son of another Thomas. The grandfather, who died in 1641, styles himself in his will as a "petty chapman," or small packman. The father of the famous John was thrice married. Secondly, in 1627, he married Margaret Bentley, mother of the author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. She also was a native of Elstow, born in 1603. He described himself as a "braseyer." By that time the Bunyans had sold all their small property, and the father of this celebrated son was a landless man. He married, thirdly, with indecent haste, a month or so after his second wife's death in June, 1644. The boy who was to become so famous, was then sixteen, not too old to be grievously affected by the death of his mother, and felt his feelings to be torn by this third marriage. In the July of the same year, too, his sister Margaret died.

The Bunyans, although generally a much-married race, have left no descendants into our own time. For some six hundred years they held a modest place among the peasantry of Bedfordshire, and threw off branches ; but when they had produced their fine flower, the Dreamer, this stalwart for truth, the tree gradually declined ; and now their place knows them no more. As we have just seen, his father, Thomas Bunyan, was thrice married. His son, John, twice married, had six children ; four by his first wife: Mary, Elizabeth, John, and Thomas ; the two others, Sarah and Joseph, by his second. Mary, his eldest, his blind child, of whom he was so tenderly fond, died young ; Elizabeth married at Goldington in 1677 John Ashley of Castle Mill. He was a miller in a good way of business. They appear to have had no children.

John, the eldest son, was, as his father and grandfather had been, a brazier, and plied his

trade in Bedford, where, in 1728, he died. He was an active member of the Meeting, and zealous in admonishing those brethren whose doings were scandalous and offensive. In the year 1700, for example, it is recorded that he, "Brother Bunyan," with "Brother Fenn," were sent by the dissenting church in Bedford to "Brother Butcher, respecting his sins. These were drunkenness, card-playing and light, unbecoming actions about Stool Ball, and the May Pole." This John Bunyan left all his property to his granddaughter, Hannah Bunyan, who died unmarried in 1770.

Thomas, the second son, died at Northill in 1695, after having been twice married. He seems to have had two sons and a daughter. One of the sons died in infancy. Of the daughter, Elizabeth, nothing is known. A Sarah Bunyan who in 1767 at St. Paul's, Bedford, married John Millard ; and an Ann Bunyan, who in 1768 married Samuel Slinn, may, it is thought, have been his granddaughters.

The youngest son, Joseph, born 1672, was married at St. Paul's, Bedford, to Mary Charnock. A son, baptized "Charnock," and a daughter, Ann, were born. Ann died an infant. Nothing further is heard either of Joseph and his wife, or of their son. If we are to credit tradition, he left for Nottinghamshire, or for Lincolnshire. At any rate, there were in the eighteenth and nineteenth century certain Bunyans in Lincoln and at Nottingham. The tombstone of the last of them, Robert Bunyan, watchmaker, is to be seen in the cemetery at Lincoln, stating that he died in 1855, aged 80, highly respected. He was a man of considerable local standing and was coroner for the city. It is claimed on the stone that he was a descendant of the writer of *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

The youngest daughter of John Bunyan, Sarah, was married in her father's lifetime, 1686, at St.

Cuthbert's, Bedford, to William Browne. No trace has been found of their children. Her granddaughter, Frances Browne, born 1722, married Charles Bithrey, a yeoman farmer, of Carlton in Bedfordshire, and died in 1803, at Carlton. She had no children. To her nephews, Brownes, or Browns, she left various bequests. That family has expanded into various branches. It is the only one which, although it does not bear the name of Bunyan, partakes of the Bunyan blood; and exemplifies the well-established fact that although families may become extinct by name, their posterity, by whatever name they are known, do not die out.

In that wonderful book of autobiography and narration of spiritual stress, "*Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*; or a brief and faithful Relation to the exceeding mercy of God in Christ to his poor servant, John Bunyan," published in 1666, Bunyan tells us that though his parents were so poor, "it pleased God to put it into their hearts to put me to school to learn both to read and write" —as certainly his father could not do. He proceeds to tell us something of the meagre quality of that schooling, in the qualification "according to the rate of other poor men's children"; and this soon was lost "even almost utterly." Sir William Harpur's grammar school at Bedford, which probably was Bunyan's, was then not only modest, but was also ill-conducted. A complaint of that time states that the schoolmaster, William Varney, charged fees, contrary to the rules, and worse, that "he hath grossly neglected the school, by frequent absence from it, by night-walking and mis-spending his time in taverns and ale-houses, and is also very cruel when present to the boys."

In November of 1644, Bunyan reached the age of sixteen. This was the age at which boys then qualified for the army. It was not at all certain,

until a discovery made in recent years settled all surmises, on which side he fought in the Civil War. We should not, indeed, use the expression, "fought," for his service in the army at all could scarce have been one of choice. Bedfordshire young men were hardly likely to be given the opportunity of joining the King's forces in that struggle; and in any case we cannot suppose Bunyan at that time to have had any very settled or deep political convictions. His father, however, certainly could not have been a Roundhead sympathiser, for he christened the son his third wife bore him in 1645 "Charles."

Portraits of John Bunyan all agree in showing him as a man with long flowing hair, and an up-brushed moustache. Looking at these portraits, and not knowing whom they represented, you would say he was of the Royalists. At a time when, to make a show of the inward and spiritual grace, it was the custom to cut the hair close, he was no "croppie," but wore his hair long. When it was the fashion to go with a mournful face, he was of a cheerful and resolute countenance; having come through the Valley of Humiliation and found peace.

But in 1924 a document was discovered which proved that Bunyan really was a soldier in the Parliamentary Army. This was a Muster Roll of the Parliamentary garrison of Newport Pagnell in 1647. Bunyan was sixteen years of age in 1644, and thus well may have been at the siege of Leicester. It seems fairly certain that he was, later, with the army in Ireland, for in his *Grace Abounding*, although he does not mention that country, he refers to his having narrowly escaped drowning in a creek of the sea. And it is to be noted that among the officers of his company at Newport Pagnell there was an Irishman, O'Hara. Except for these army movements the name of

COTTAGE AT ELSTOW WHERE BUNYAN LIVED AFTER HIS MARRIAGE.

O'Hara would be an extremely unlikely one in Bedfordshire in the seventeenth century. The Newport Muster Roll found in the Record Office, contains the names of eighteen officers and seventy-nine privates. Towards the close of that year, 1647, he took his discharge from the army, and rejoined his father at Elstow, as a tinker and brazier.

On Bunyan's discharge from the army he returned to Elstow, perhaps not very willingly, with a stepmother there. At any rate, he very soon married. The name, even the Christian name, of his first wife is unknown, nor is it known where they were married. But we know where they set up their extremely modest housekeeping. There yet stands in Elstow village street the cottage where they lived; not altogether in the likeness of what it originally was, for then and until years comparatively recent, it had a thatched, not a tiled, roof, and there was then attached to it, at the south end, a forge at which Bunyan plied the traditional trade of his family, as a brazier and tinker. His wife was a serious and religious woman, and we are told she was in the habit of telling him "what a godly man" was her father. Evidently Bunyan therefore never knew him. How poor a home was theirs he tells us. "This woman and I came together as poor as poor might be, not having so much household stuff as a dish or a spoon betwixt both." All she had brought towards a home were two books that had belonged to that godly father; two religious books, *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*, by one Arthur Dent, a dissenting preacher of South Shoebury in Essex; first published in 1601; and *The Practice of Piety*, by Lewis Bayly, Bishop of Bangor, first published in 1612. These books both enjoyed a great popularity, and for many years editions of them continued to be issued.

Bunyan tells us "In these I should sometimes

read with her, wherein I also found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me."

It is easily to be understood that in the first of these two books, Bunyan in his as yet unregenerate state should find some such pleasing things; for it is in parts an entertaining work, with many quaint and racy passages. It is cast in the form of a discussion between four persons: a Divine; a Plain Honest Man; an Ignorant Man; and a Caviller, who agree to discuss beliefs and conduct on an idle May day, under "yonder oke-tree, where there is a goodly arbour and handsome seats, and where all may sit in the shadowe and conferre of heavenly matters." Towards the conclusion the Ignorant Man is seriously troubled about his spiritual condition. Then says Caviller, "Come then home with me, and thou shalt have a speedie remedie, in many pleasant and merry bookes, *Bevis of Southampton*; *Ellen of Rummin*; *the Merrie Jest of the Frier and the Boy*; *the Pleasant Story of Clem of the Clough*; *Adam Belt and William of Cloudesley*; *The odde tale of William, Richard, and Humfrey*; *The Pretie Conceit of John Splinter's last Will and Testament*; which all are excellent and singular bookes against heart qualmes."

Bunyan has accused himself as "the worst of sinners." He protested too much, and yet his accusations are much to the point. He says "Even as a child I had few equals in cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming the holy name of God"; and when he was grown up he still continued, if we will believe, in that way, so that a woman "who was a loose and ungodly wretch protested that it made her tremble to hear me, as the ungodliest fellow for swearing ever she heard in all her life, and that it was enough to spoil all the youth in the whole town." This seems specific enough.

Not yet was the storm of the spirit that long was to devastate his life before he found peace come upon him. He tells us that at this time he went to church twice a day "and with the foremost," and found great delight in it; but that was for outward things; for show and display. He had a great reverence for the clergyman and the service, for the church itself and its appurtenances and even for the parish clerk. Methinks this last was reverence run somewhat to seed.

"So overcome was I with the spirit of superstition" (we quote Bunyan—*not* Lord Hugh Cecil) "that I adored, and that with great devotion, even all things (both the high place, priest, clerk, vestment, service and what else) belonging to the church."

It is amazing to find all the liturgical and vestment High Church details here suggested present in the services held in Elstow Church in those years of the Commonwealth, when commonly anything savouring of Episcopacy would have secured the ejection of any vicar. But there it is: the vicar of Elstow was one for ritual and display, and no one seems to have interfered with him (even though he were so near that dissenting stronghold, the town of Bedford), from the time of his induction in 1639 to 1664. It defies explanation.

Bunyan seems narrowly to have escaped being an idolator; a worshipper of the form and not the essentials. He reverenced the squibs and catherine-wheels and all the other esoteric embellishments with which the vestments were embroidered. We do not know if this clergyman were the model for his Mr. Two Tongues in *The Pilgrim's Progress* of after years; but in those early years he was, it seems, looked upon by Bunyan as little less than a deity, and not the ecclesiastical Guy Fawkes he really appears to have been.

But Bunyan's conscience, even when a child, had been active. And now it showed activity on the subject of Sunday sports, and on the subject of the vanity in dress in which "the professors" attended church service. As for the sports, they were an old English Sunday custom, which the new age had begun to condemn. A voice came to him one Sunday on Elstow Green, when he was playing tip-cat, "A voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or wilt thou have thy sins and go to hell?' I was put into an exceeding maze. Wherefore, leaving my cat upon the ground I looked up to heaven, and was as if I had with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me."

Macaulay rightly points out that Bunyan's own account of his youthful depravities must be taken to be that of one whose vivid imagination and religious experiences led him to place himself in the very worst light. "There cannot be," says Macaulay, "a greater mistake than to infer, from the strong expressions in which a devout man bemoans his exceeding sinfulness, that he had led a worse life than his neighbours. Many excellent persons, whose moral character from boyhood to old age had been free from any stain discernible to their fellow-creatures, have in their autobiographies and diaries applied to themselves, and doubtless with sincerity, epithets as severe as could be applied to Titus Oates or Mrs. Brownrigg. It is quite certain that Bunyan was, at eighteen, what, in any but the most puritanical circles, would have been considered as a young man of singular gravity and innocence. Indeed, it may be remarked that he, like many other penitents, who, in general terms, acknowledge themselves to have been the worst of mankind, fired up and

stood vigorously on his defence, whenever any particular charge was brought against him by others. He declared, it is true, that he had let loose the reins on the neck of his lusts, that he had delighted in all transgressions against the divine law, and that he had been the ringleader of the youth of Elstow is all manner of vice. But when those who wished him ill accused him of licentious amours, he called on God and the angels to attest his purity."

The four chief sins of which he really was guilty, apart from the swearing and blasphemy, which he had forsaken, were dancing, ringing the bells of Elstow church, playing tip-cat, and reading the history of Sir Bevis of Southampton, of which, it would seem, he first heard in the course of reading a religious book ! If these be indeed sins, and folk are to be damned for them, then there is no help for this twentieth century, with its dancing crazes !

We may well compare Bunyan's confession of sins with the equally poetic and imaginative account of St. Guthlac in the seventh century, not indeed of his sins, but of the personal fiends and devils of all sorts which came constantly and tortured him with pincers in his cell at Croyland ; the actual facts being that in those fens he had contracted agues and rheumatism.

In spite of the obvious exaggeration by Bunyan of the sins of his youth, which we would not style " sins " at all, one Ryland, a person of great note among the Nonconformists, many years ago, commenting on Bunyan's life, takes this part of the autobiography literally and says : " No man of common sense or of common integrity can deny that Bunyan was a practical atheist ; a worthless, contemptible infidel; a vile rebel to God and goodness ; a common profligate ; a soul-despising, a soul-murdering, a soul-damning, thoughtless

wretch as could exist on the face of the earth." And then Ryland goes on to marvel at the change to a miracle of goodness, wisdom, and love.

Bunyan the self-accuser, would not have welcomed this.

For four years this unhappy man suffered from all the torments that a super-sensitive conscience can apply. He was of more delicate fibre than fortunately are most of us, who believe in the abiding goodness and forbearance of the Almighty. It will be well for us if, in that easy belief, we do not err on the other side and outrage that source of all good.

It was a wrench for him to give up his bell-ringing. He did so give it up, but the love of it yet was in him. That, too, in his frame of mind was a sin. He leant against the doorway of the belfry-tower and watched others do what he fain would, if he dared. But even this looking on might be disastrous. The bell, the tower itself, might fall and then what would be his eternal portion ? He bethought him of a terrible happening in his own Bedfordshire, in which while a man was ringing, a flash of lightning passed through the belfry door, " and struck him stark dead." It was better to leave bell-ringing alone. " God cannot choose but be pleased with me now," he thought when he gave up his pleasures.

He was for a while in a state of contentment, but not for long. Doubts began to assail him ; for, seeking the society of the few early believers in the Dissenting Church of Bedford, he found to his dismay that they spoke almost as if it had been a strange tongue. They were joyful and yet humble. Was God really pleased with him ? He sought for signs. Faith, he read, could work miracles. What if he should try, as he went the road between Elstow and Bedford, and put it to the test with the rain-puddles that lay there, and the stones.

"Puddle, be ye dry! Stone, be thou moved!" And if no miracle happened? He would, he thought, be a lost soul, cast away into the very deeps, irrecoverably.

Religious melancholia is one of the two chief subjects to fill our lunatic asylumns to-day. John Bunyan at this stage, like Cowper in the next century, was near madness in this terrible stress.

But then there came one of his many alternating moods. He had not been permitted to tempt God. God loved even him. He felt at the time so full of a sense of God's love that he could go even into the fields and tell the crows in the plough-lands of it. The remembrance of that day of supreme joy, he thought, would remain with him even in forty years' time. But not forty hours passed before he was in deeper straits than before. Worse doubts beset him, and his mind was now haunted by intolerable involuntary kinds of blasphemies. Yet, amidst all these desolating experiences he had this one last stay; he realized that this was not himself. Almost he thought his was a case of demoniacal possession; for all the while he was struggling for good. The phrase occurred to him, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" and the promise of Christ's atonement saved him from utter despair. At this time those good folk whose society he had sought had brought him to Gifford, then their pastor, who helped him, so far as any human being could. Peace was at hand, even though Apollyon might straddle the way, and although the last fight was the worst, and the longest. He was beset by the Evil One to "sell a part with the blessed Christ, to exchange Him for the things of this life—for anything. Sell Christ for this, or sell Christ for that; sell Him, sell Him." By day and by night, in a whole year this voice urged him. He could not even stoop to pick up a pin, or chop a stick, or

cast an eye to look on anything, without this temptation. And at last one morning, as he lay in bed the thought came that he had lost the fight. "Let Him go, if He will!" When he went into Bedford after this, it seemed as if the very sun grudged its light to him, and the stones in the street and the tiles upon the roofs of the houses appeared to rise or to lean down to him.

Then came the comforting thought, one night, of that assurance: "I have loved Thee with an everlasting love." The strife was over and he was not lost.

CHAPTER II

The Puritans—"A Tinker oft in quod"—Bunyan preaches in Yielden Church—Arrest in Samsell Fields—Harlington House

GIFFORD warmly encouraged this sorely tried convert, and found in him the making of a preacher. His preaching was the picturesque imagery of a romantic imagination that firmly believed in all the horrors that awaited the ungodly in the after life, and the joys that were to be the reward of the saints. To the first he could be terrible, to those who would stay to listen; to the second comforting against all the brunts and stumbling-blocks in this life. Something of his quality in his setting forth of the extremely bad prospects of the unbeliever, or, worse, of those who believed, and yet led evil lives, may be judged from a little book of his, published in 1658, and of which the origin, as in the case of so many of is works, was a sermon, or sermons. The book has the terrifying title, "*Sighs from Hell*; or, the Groans of a Damned Soul." The text on which this book is based is the parable of Dives, the rich man, and Lazarus, the poor man. In the course of it he asks us to consider "how terrible it will be to have all the ten commandments condemn thee, one after another; more terrible then to have ten of the biggest pieces of ordnance in England to be discharged against thy body, thunder, thunder, one after another!" But the elect and the faithful had their standby. He says: "I tell thee, friend, there are some promises that the Lord hath helped me to lay hold of Jesus Christ through

and by, that I would not have out of the Bible for as much gold and silver as can lie between York and London, piled up to the stars."

This eloquent preaching, and the hold it soon took upon his hearers, soon raised up questions of the right of "the tinker," one who had not been ordained, to preach at all. He says, "When I went first to preach the Word abroad, the doctors and priests of the country did open wide against me."

Bunyan has been described as a Puritan. It well may be that he was so, yet what is a Puritan? The excesses of what is called "Puritanism" make the description unsavoury. Those excesses meant republicanism, violence, and destruction; they meant, we well may consider, hypocrisy and self-righteousness; and they laid England under a yoke of sadness for years. But it would be a great mistake to think that all who called themselves Puritans, or were so called, were men sincerely religious. In every time of great, emotional crises you have the extremists and the rogues and scoundrels, too, who, clinging to the skirts of a cause, discredit it with their violence. Does anyone suppose that *all* those that threw in their lot with the Puritans were honest men? If anyone has that idea, he is wrong. The criminals, the ne'er-do-wells, the merely idle, and the vicious saw their opportunity, and took it.

The Puritan spirit, historically, arose in the Church of England itself. It was a desire to complete the work of the Reformation, which many within the reformed Church considered unfinished. It was a movement that demanded the true spirit of the Gospel which not merely was not being shown, but rightly was suspected to be in danger of total extinction. Puritanism, which took its origin so early as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, would have made but little progress outside

the ranks of the clergy had it not been for the spread of education and the dissemination of the Scriptures among the people. The new leaven worked rapidly, and the more potently because of the High Church and Romanizing movements in the reigns of James the First and of the first Charles. It is strange what contrary results emerge from men's activities. Archbishop Laud, executed for his part in the move towards Rome, was ironically enough, a prominent course of the spread of Puritan feeling, and for much of the excesses that followed ; and " The Royal Martyr's" political faithlessness on behalf of the High Church party produced a Puritan triumph and the Commonwealth.

But we have no evidence at all that Bunyan was a Puritan of this political cast. As one thirsting for the pure milk of the Gospel, he was a Puritan indeed ; but nothing in his life or in his writings shows him in the nature of a destroyer of churches and holy things. In a time when extremists were running up and down the country, making much havoc, and seeking the undermining of all authority, Bunyan counselled meekness towards all magistrates and obedience to them and the King. They were set over us, he said, by God. But he drew the line at matters of conscience. He would submit his conscience to no man. At the same time, if this nonconformity with authority in affairs of religion brought him into conflict with the law, he would patiently suffer what he must.

It often is asked " What shall we style Bunyan : was he a Baptist, a Congregationalist, an Independent ? " He was received by Gifford in 1653 into the Dissenting Church of Bedford ; and he was baptized there in the river Ouse, by total immersion, as was Gifford's practice ; but Bunyan himself held the rite to be of no essential virtue. He was

indifferent about it. If we wish to know by what name he would call himself, we have but to read his *Confession of Faith, and a Reason for My Practice*, 1672, and again, his answer to a controversialist: "You ask me, How long is it since I was a Baptist? I must tell you I know none to whom that title is so proper as to the disciples of John. And since you would know by what name I would be distinguished from others, I tell you I would be, and hope I am A CHRISTIAN, and choose, if God should count me worthy, to be called a Christian, a believer, or other such name which is approved by the Holy Ghost. And as for those titles of Anabaptists, Independents, Presbyterians, or the like, I conclude that they came neither from Jerusalem, nor Antioch, but rather from Hell and Babylon, for they naturally tend to divisions."

It was in 1653, when not yet rid of his spiritual storms, that he removed from Elstow and took up his trade of tinker in the parish of St. Cuthbert's. Three years later his wife died, leaving him with four children, the eldest his daughter Mary, born blind in 1650. A year later he married again. In Bedford he seems to have been in a fair, if small, way of business; but always that contemptuous name of "tinker" followed him. The world is ever like that, and it is even to-day, as "Bunyan the tinker" that those who do not share his views are apt to style him.

There is much room for error in a synopsis. It may, in its abbreviations, give a false impression. Thus it is that Mr. Rudyard Kipling's sprightly summary of Bunyan is compact alike of fact and fiction:

> "A pedlar from a hovel, the lowest of the low,
> The father of the novel, Salvation's first Defoe
> A tinker out of Bedford, A vagrant oft in quod,
> A private under Fairfax, A Minister of God."

We do not know that Bunyan was ever a pedlar,

and "the lowest of the low" is but to accept Bunyan's own exaggerated tongue in *Grace Abounding*; while to style him a "vagrant oft in quod" is sheer nonsense. Macaulay, whom it is the fashion now to decry, was more acute. But then he was not writing a poetic summary; he was engaged upon an essay. He had the perception to note that Bunyan, in his autobiography *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, was portraying both his social antecedents and his sins in the blackest of colours. "I was," he writes, "of a low and inconsiderable generation, my father's house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all families in the land." His father was a tinker and brasier, earning bread for his children by mending pots and kettles; and John himself followed the same despised trade. A tinker's trade has certainly always been looked upon with contempt and suspicion; the tinker, it is commonly said, mends one hole and makes two more; while to "tinker" at anything is an expression which means an inefficient bungling. "A tinker's damn," or "A tinker's curse" in the expression "not worth a tinker's curse," seems to imply that tinkers will swear on the least provocation, or none at all.

The years on to 1660 were busy ones for Bunyan, the new-found preacher of the Dissenting Church in Bedford. He was in demand not only in the town, but in all the villages and farm-houses within a wide radius of that countryside. Bedfordshire and the neighbouring shires are full of traditions of him. The ordained, the only true and covenanted dispensers, were furious; and even in those years of liberty an indictment was issued against him for preaching at Eaton Socon; even though nothing came of it. Yet there were some of the broader-minded who actually invited "the tinker" to preach in their churches, or if

not in their churches, at any rate in their churchyards. It was while thus addressing people in the churchyard at Melbourn that he won over one who, passing by, had reined in his horse "to hear the tinker prate." This was "a Cambridge scholar, and none of the soberest of them neither." He stayed to hear, and was led into the way. He was that William Bedford who, in years to come, founded the Congregational Meeting in Royston.

At Yielden, in the extreme north-east border of Bedfordshire, Bunyan preached in the parish church—or the "steeple-house," as he would have called it—on Christmas Day, 1659, by invitation of the rector, the Rev. William Dell. Here, indeed, was a marvellous turning of the tables upon the behaviour of a former rector, John Pocklington, who in 1635 had attacked the Nonconformists, and unfavourably stigmatized the Marian martyrs and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. Dr. William Dell, Puritan Master of Caius College, Cambridge, and formerly Chaplain in the army of Fairfax, was no believer in the Prayer Book, nor in State religion. Bunyan preached to satisfaction on that invitation; but Dell was to hear of it later, when some of the opposite beliefs, soon after the Restoration in the next year sent up a petition to the House of Lords. They lost no time in seizing that opportunity, for the King had come back to his own at the end of May, and the petition is dated June 20th. In this document it is declared, and no doubt with truth, that the rector had said "in the public congregation that he had rather hear a plain countryman speak in the church that came from the plough than the best orthodox minister that was in the country." Stated so baldly, this pronouncement sounds extremely offensive; but a clause in what the rector actually had said is obviously omitted, for the proviso would almost certainly be "if he were sent of

YIELDEN.

God." The petition then goes on to say that " on Christmas Day last, one Bunyan, of Bedford, a tinker, was countenanced and suffered to speak in his pulpit to the congregation, and no orthodox minister officiated in the church that day."

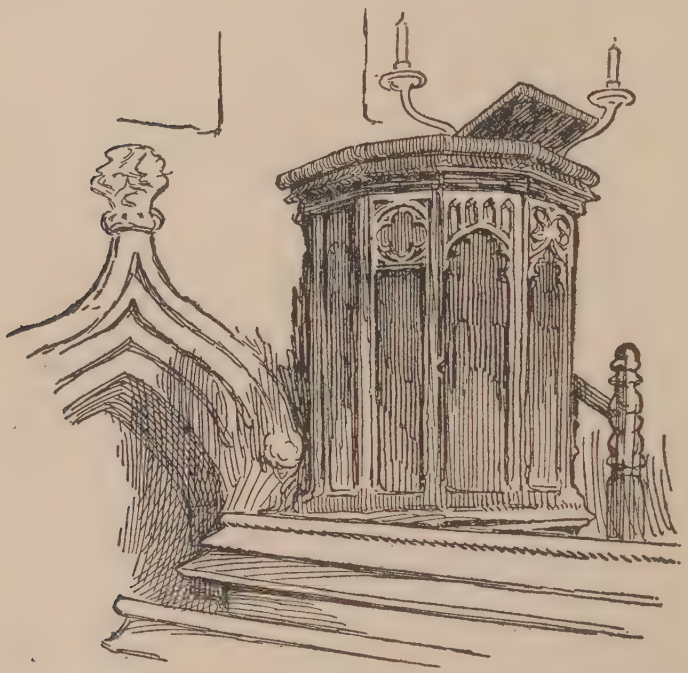
There was probably as much social as religious feeling in the minds of those who sent up their petition. You may imagine the squires and their ladies sitting in Yielden church, obliged—unless they would create a scandal by leaving—to hear this fellow, a tinker, preaching to them; and perhaps even *at* them.

We readily may imagine the horrific effect of this petition upon the Lords in London. They probably had never yet heard of Bunyan. Here, without qualification, was an accusing statement, signed by all the best and most reputable people in Yielden, declaring that a tinker had been invited to preach from the pulpit there; and had in fact, so preached. Not, mark you, the tinker of Bedford, the preacher, but just a tinker; pre-supposing in the minds of uninformed majesties, authorities, and powers not endowed with local Bedfordshire knowledge, all kinds of cynical indignities and blasphemies inflicted upon them by the malevolence of the rector. Nothing, however, came of their attempt, for the petition is marked as dismissed July 25th, 1660.

We may, if we will, see the actual pulpit, still in use in Yielden Church, from which Bunyan preached on that day. Yielden is worth visiting for its own sake. The road into it is of an extremely romantic character. Coming downhill, you see the vast, grass-grown mounds and dykes of what once was a castle of the Traillys, dating from soon after the Norman Conquest, and demolished before 1400. Neither the castle nor the family of Trailly seems to have ever experienced or done anything of any note, for history is silent

about them. Over this scene presides the great fourteenth-century church. The pulpit is a pre-Reformation one of wood.

Soon after Bunyan's selection by the brethren



PULPIT IN YIELDEN CHURCH FROM WHICH BUNYAN PREACHED.

at Bedford to be, in effect, the head of their community, by virtue of his burning eloquence, that "gift of utterance" which drew all hearts, he published the first of those sixty works that stand to his name. It is the little book issued in 1656 entitled "*Some Gospel Truths Opened*, by that unworthy servant of Christ, John Bunyan, of Bedford, by the Grace of God, preacher of the Gospel of His dear Son."

Other works rapidly followed. But the Commonwealth and the Protectorate of Oliver Crom-

SAMSELL FIELDS AND SHARPENHOE: WHERE BUNYAN WAS ARRESTED.

well were drawing to a close. In 1660 with the Restoration of Charles the Second, followed by the revival of the Church of England and the public order for the reading of the Liturgy, the Nonconformists were in great peril. This edict for the use of the Book of Common Prayer, and the compulsion to attend the church services, boded ill for Bunyan and his sturdy fellows; but there were more than those things in store for preachers such as he. Church and State, indissolubly united, regarded preachers outside the Establishment as dangers, not only to spiritual domination, but to the body politic as well. Thus the Act of Uniformity in Public Worship, passed in 1664, created Nonconformists, at one stroke, persons disaffected to the State itself. Men who had hitherto preached the Gospel without let or hindrance now found themselves liable to fine or imprisonment; with the prospect of worse. A peculiarly hard feature of this Act was that, while it made preaching a penal offence, and included even the hearers, in the woods and open places and in private houses, it also provided for rewarding informers, who were to receive a portion of the fines inflicted. This cut at the very root of neighbourly good feeling, and rendered people suspicious of one another. Spies were suspected everywhere, and the tipstaffs and other petty officers of the law, who often had no other conscience than that which resides within the pocket, were earnest in hunting those that resisted, not from any zeal on behalf of the new law, but in order to gain a better livelihood.

Bunyan, however, was not personally a very promising quarry for such. He would not have paid for the energies expended in hunting him, for he was a poor man from whom fines could not be extracted. But, as the most prominent man of the sort in Bedfordshire, it was desirable to lay

him by the heels, and cast him in prison, if so be he could not be persuaded to desist.

The opportunity soon came. There are many places associated with Bunyan's open-air preaching, but none more intimately than what are known as "Samsell Fields," between Harlington and Westoning. There, in a lonely and secluded situation, was the hamlet of Lower Samsell, of which nothing remains to us but one farmhouse, and that a modern one. Here, at a moated farm, long since destroyed, were those who cherished Nonconformist sympathies. It would be useless now to seek the site for traces of that farm. It is a lovely green lane, with noble trees, that we traverse, to this spot; with at one end a fine glimpse of the great hill of Sharpenhoe.

Bunyan had promised to address a meeting, eager to hear him. The project became known to the magistrates, and a warrant was made out under an old Act of Elizabeth to arrest him as a seditious person; "as if," says Bunyan himself, "we did intend to do some fearful business to the destruction of the country." He could readily have escaped, had he so wished; and there were those who advised it, especially the owner of the farmhouse, who himself would be in peril as the "harbourer of a conventicle." "But," says Bunyan, absolving him of fears for himself, "he was, I think, more afraid for me"; and Bunyan therefore decided to remain.

He had selected his text, and had just begun to preach, when the emissaries of the law came. They were to have him to Harlington Manor House, in a village not quite two miles away, the residence of Francis Wingate, a justice of the peace; but as he was not at home that day, a friendly farmer housed Bunyan for that night. The next afternoon the party appeared at Harlington. It was already dark on that November day when they

HARLINGTON MANOR HOUSE.

came into the "Great Parlour." We cannot accuse Wingate of being a persecutor, even though he were not a sympathizer. It was his duty to act on information laid, and to examine the prisoner, before making out the mittimus, should the need be established, that would commit him to gaol, there to await trial. It is to be noted that he asked what arms were found at this meeting. There were, of course, no arms ; but the authorities were genuinely alarmed at the violent language and deeds of some religious fanatics, and did not know when or in what way these might spread into insurrections.

Wingate seems to have been a short-tempered man, and we must always recollect that he had the aristocratic prejudice against what he would think the "presumption" of one of Bunyan's class in arguing with him. He declared he would "break the neck of these unlawful meetings" ; but had Bunyan given an assurance that he would refrain from preaching, he might have departed free. But he "would not leave speaking the word of God."

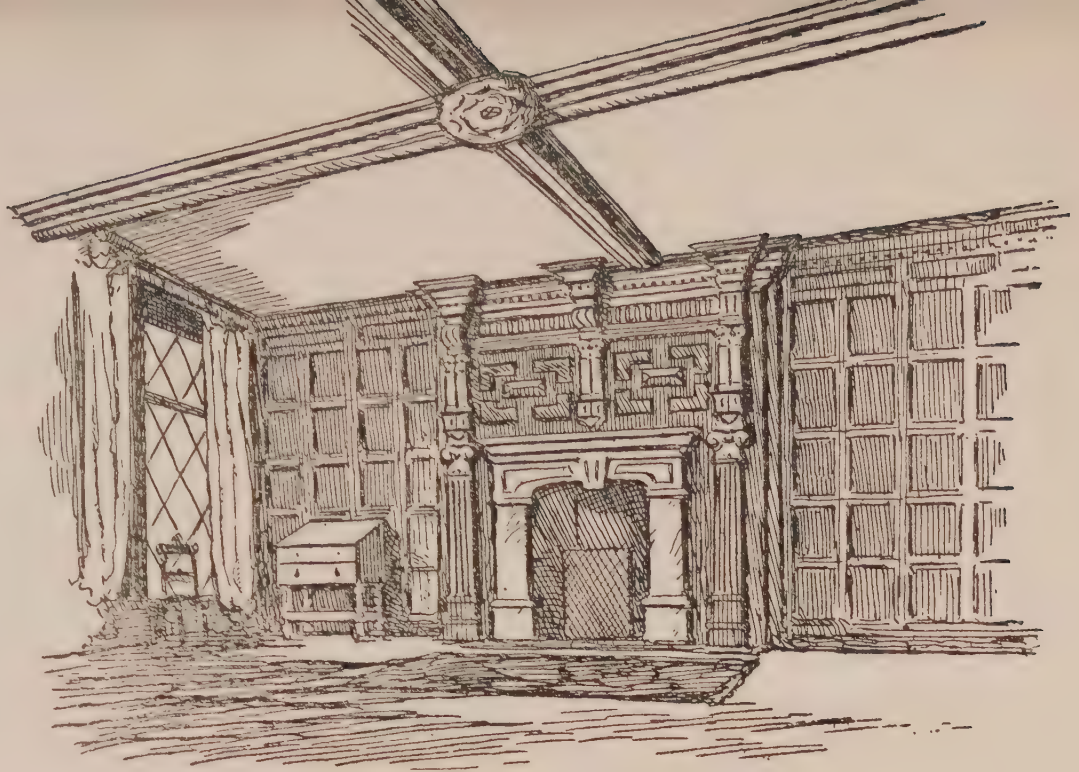
Then there came into the room Dr. Lindall, Wingate's father-in-law and vicar of Harlington, "an old enemy of the truth, taunting me with many reviling terms," and comparing him with "one Alexander the Coppersmith he had read of, aiming, 'tis like, at me, because I was a tinker." And Dr. William Foster, an ecclesiastical lawyer of Bedford, and Wingate's brother-in-law, came in and begged him to yield. But he refused, and the committal was duly made, under that old Act of Parliament of Queen Elizabeth's time. It is to be admitted that Wingate, as a Justice, could not do otherwise.

So next day he was taken to Bedford Gaol, thirteen miles distant. Tradition points to an attic in Harlington Manor House where he was kept for the night.

This most dramatic scene of Bunyan's career may still be found, for the old Manor House yet stands in the midst of Harlington village. It is not a secluded house. The life of that agricultural community passes around it, at the four cross roads, and the privacy of its owners might very well be scarcely existent did it remain in every circumstance what it was. In the times of which

THE ATTIC IN HARLINGTON MANOR HOUSE.

we have been speaking a wide and somewhat imposing gateway opened northward, directly to the village street, looking towards the church; but that garden entrance has long since been bricked up and the gate-piers removed; while the enclosing brick wall has been raised so high that only the upper part of the house can be seen from without. The building is flanked by shallow wings and is faced with old plaster, ruled into courses to resemble stone. In the high-pitched roof there were formerly, according to an old illustration, five dormer windows, but these have been removed. But in most other respects the house remains



THE "GREAT PARLOUR," HARLINGTON MANOR HOUSE.

structurally much the same. It is an interesting mansion, and almost a stately one, much older than those times and chiefly of the Tudor period, but greatly remodelled within and without about the reign of James the First.

The " Great Parlour " may readily be identified with the present drawing-room, for it is the most important room in the house, and a beautiful one, panelled throughout in oak now dark with age, and furnished with an elaborately designed overmantel. Two handsomely moulded beams cross

HARLINGTON.

the ceiling, provided at their intersection with a great boss, carved with the Tudor rose, of an earlier period than the panelling.

Harlington is a typical old Bedfordshire village, with quaint thatched cottages. Beyond the church, and at the foot of the steep meadows toward Samsell, is an aged and immense oak, with a great warty and bulging trunk, well known in all these parts as " Bunyan's Oak." It is flourishing yet, though hollow. By climbing a little way, it will be found that the hollow trunk is filled with

earth, forming a kind of platform, or pulpit, from which Bunyan is said to have preached.

The Wingate family did not retain Harlington Manor very long after Bunyan's arrest. Francis Wingate was succeeded in turn by his three sons,

BUNYAN'S OAK, HARLINGTON.

who squandered most of the estate of which the remaining portion came to their nephew, Arthur Jennings. It is curious that all the Wingate descendants became ardent adherents of that Nonconformist cause for which Bunyan stood.

CHAPTER III

Twelve years in Bedford Gaol—Release—The Declaration of Indulgence—Licence as a Preacher—Probable end of his brazier and tinker occupation—Discovery of his anvil

SO was the preacher committed to the old County Gaol, which stood at the corner of the High Street and Gaol Lane, Bedford. Great was the consternation, not only of his family but of the brethren, and efforts were made to get him bailed until the opening of the sessions in the following January. All was, however, in vain; and there he lay until the Quarter Sessions, held in the old Chapel of Herne, were opened. This Chapel, long since demolished, originated none knows how, or for what purpose; nor even is it known how came about that name, Herne. Alternatively, since it was near the Grammar School, it was known as "Schoolhouse Chapel," and at that time long had ceased to be used for any religious purpose. It was a much patched and altered building, of Early English character; and at that time, since there was no Shire Hall, or other public building, it served a turn as Assize Court.

There were five local great men sitting as justices, to hear this indictment for "devilishly and perniciously abstaining from coming to church to hear divine service, and for being a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the King."

Bunyan answered to this indictment, that he

went to the church of God, and by grace was a member with the people over whom Christ is the head. Sir John Kelynge, Chairman of the Bench, like his four brother justices, was strongly opposed to the dissenters. As barrister, he had recently acted as Crown Counsel. In the following year he became a Member of Parliament, and in 1665 he was appointed Lord Chief Justice. The other four justices were Sir George Blundell, of Cardington; Sir Henry Chester, of Tilsworth; Sir William Beecher, of Hanbury; and Thomas Snagg, of Marston Morteyne. The trial seems to have resolved itself into an unseemly wrangle over points of religion, in which Bunyan scored every time; but with no chance of winning an acquittal; as the law was not argumentative, even if the Bench might be. Sir John Kelynge had himself suffered during the Commonwealth, and was now inclined to make suffer any who were in the least opposed to the new authority.

When Bunyan had answered that he attended the church of God, Kelynge asked abruptly: "But do you come to church—you know what I mean—to the parish church to hear divine service?" Bunyan answered that he did not. The discussion, for such it had become, arrived at the merits of the Prayer Book. Bunyan said he could pray very well without it, whereupon he was asked if his God were not Beelzebub, and told he was possessed of delusions and the devil. In fact, the Bench seem to have forsaken their secular functions, for a while, and to have usurped those of a Court of Arches or other Ecclesiastical authority. When Bunyan remarked that at meetings for prayer they had had "the comfortable presence of God among them," Kelynge replied that this was "pedlar's French." "Leave off canting," he said, "and show your authority for preaching." To which Bunyan cited the

Epistle of St. Peter, about every man ministering according to his gifts.

"Let me," rejoined Kelynge, in return, "open the Scriptures a little to you. As every man hath received the gift; that is, as every man hath received a trade, let him follow it. If any man have received a gift of tinkering, as thou hast done, let him follow his tinkering; and so other men their trades, and the preacher his."

In the end, the prisoner was committed to prison for a certain three months, "and then," added the Chairman, "if then you do not submit to go to church and leave off preaching, you must be banished the realm."

"I am at a point with you," was Bunyan's parting remark, as the gaoler removed him, "for if I were out of prison to-morrow, I would preach the Gospel, by the help of God!" So, with a threat that if he would he should suffer for it, he went to his cell.

When the last weeks of those three months were come, the Clerk of the Peace came to him, to reason with him; to threaten and to cajole by turn. We need not look upon this as an unworthy act, whether he came of his own will or was sent. There evidently was a disposition not to be hard upon Bunyan. All one can bring against these persons is that they were administering hard laws, and that they could not honestly understand a man having a conscience so insistent as that Bunyan possessed, or was possessed by.

It had so happened that in the meanwhile a rising, or a riot of Fifth Monarchy men, under a fanatic, one Venner, had taken place in London. These fanatics, maddened by a reading of the apocalyptic visions in the Book of Revelation, had sought to realize the Kingdom of God on earth by upsetting that of King Charles the Second. They had suffered for it, on the scaffold; but their

act had unfortunately lent point to those who insisted upon conforming to the Established Church. Venner's riot was held up to Bunyan as a terrible warning; but to this he replied that while he could not conform, and could not relinquish preaching, he was a law-abiding man and behaved himself to the King's Government, as a man and a Christian. If opportunity were given, he would display his loyalty, alike by word and deed. This was not enough. Like Pharaoh, they would not let him go. Criminals were accorded the King's clemency a few weeks later, and pardoned, but Bunyan was not released; although by this time his continued imprisonment was, strictly, illegal. At the so-called "Midsummer" Assizes, held in August 1661, his valiant wife presented a petition to the Judge of Assize, Sir Matthew Hale, praying for the release of her husband, but without effect. Gently he received her, telling her he would do what he could, but feared it would be of no avail. The next day she threw a petition into the carriage as it was proceeding to the Assizes. The other Judge, Twisden, took it, and told her it was no good; her husband could not be released until he would promise not to preach. Again she appealed to Hale, but Sir Henry Chester, the hard-hearted, was there, and said Bunyan was a hot-spirited fellow who had caused much trouble. There was one kindly hearted person there, the High Sheriff, Edmund Wylde, of Houghton Conquest, who saw her distress, and advised her to make one more attempt, at the "Swan," on the morrow, when the business of the Assizes was over, before the Judges left the town.

To the "Swan Chamber," accordingly, she went; the judges were there, with many of the justices and gentry of the shire. Hale was again inclined to hear her. Twisden asked if Bunyan would cease from preaching.

"My lord," said she, "he dare not leave off preaching as long as he can speak."

What then, asked Twisden, was the use of speaking about him? To this Elizabeth answered that her husband desired merely to live peaceably and to follow his calling, and so maintain his family. "There is need for that, my lord; for I have four small children that cannot help themselves, and one is blind, and we have nothing to live upon but the charity of good people."

To this appeal Hale was inclined to be pitiful. "Hast thou four children? Thou art but a young woman to have four children."

"My lord," said she, "I am but mother-in-law to them, having not been married to him yet but full two years."

"Alas! poor woman," exclaimed Hale. Twisden, however, said she made a cloak of her poverty. He and Sir Henry Chester were of other stuff than Hale. Like that Dr. Smith, Professor of Arabic and keeper of the University Library at Cambridge, who had happened upon Bunyan preaching in a barn at Toft in May, 1659, they were "angry with the tinker because he strove to mend souls as well as kettles and pans," and enlarged his offence by proving himself more skilful in the task than those who had been graduated from a university.

So in the county gaol Bunyan remained. He was there for twelve years, until the order of release came, on May 17th, 1672, from the Privy Council in London.

Inquiriers into the circumstances of this long term of imprisonment come to very different conclusions, according to their prejudices; but it would really seem that the more or less hardships of it varied according to the gaolers employed from time to time. Sometimes they were "cruel and oppressive"; at others they were in sympathy

with himself and the numerous other prisoners there for conscience' sake.

It does not seem to have been often close confinement in a cell; and it is on record that he not only preached in gaol, but that he sometimes attended meetings outside. In short, like much of the imprisonment of that period, it was detention, often with liberty in the day, on parole to return at night. But Bunyan's livelihood at his trade of brazier and tinker was destroyed in all this time, and he was reduced, for providing a living for wife and children, to making in gaol "long tagged laces"—many hundred gross of them.

This forms a singular picture of prison life in the seventeenth century.

The prospect of the hardships awaiting his wife and children came near turning that stout heart to water; for Bunyan was a tender-hearted man. There were possible penalties awaiting him, if he continued obstinately to refuse conformity and not to make promise of not again preaching. Under the terms of that old Act of the thirty-fifth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign, he might be banished the realm; and if daring to return after such banishment, might be treated as a felon, and hanged. The Act had, of course, become inoperative during the Commonwealth, but it seems not actually to have been repealed. It was not, however, within the bounds of probability these extreme penalties would have been inflicted, whatever the liking of the High Church party may have been in the matter of stubborn Nonconformists, for there were too many of that kind in the country.

"The parting with my poor wife and children," wrote Bunyan, "hath often been to me as the pulling of my flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am too, too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should have often

brought to my mind the hardships, miseries, and wants my poor Family was like to meet with, should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had besides. Oh, the thoughts of the hardships I thought my Blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces. Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world ! Thou must be beaten, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee. But yet, thought I, I must venture all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you."

A sympathetic gaoler had on one occasion given him leave even to stay outside until the next morning ; yet his uneasiness was such that he returned at a late hour, to be blamed for his coming back so untimely.

" Is John Bunyan safe ? " asked an inspecting official the next day. " Yes," returned the gaoler, afterwards addressing his prisoner, " Well, you may go out again when you think proper, for you know when to return, better than I can tell you."

It is a circumstance little known, but true and very curious in this connection, that in the summer of 1666, mid way in these twelve years, Bunyan had a release of a few weeks, and was re-arrested, at what place is not known, for again preaching.

But the uncertainty of alternating clemency and harshness must none the less have been trying. The gaoler himself was reprimanded for giving his prisoner so much liberty, and for long afterwards, we are told, he was " forbidden even to look out of the door."

The scene of the writing of *The Pilgrim's Progress* was, in the words of Bunyan himself, in later editions, " The Jail." But he does not tell us which gaol. The gaol in which that work was written was the prison on Bedford Bridge.

This long and singularly varied imprisonment ended in 1672, not from any especial act of clemency towards Bunyan, the individual, but as part of a general gaol-delivery of prisoners such as he. This general release came under that stroke of policy, the Declaration of Indulgence towards Nonconformists and Recusants, issued by the King in March. The Nonconformists saw plainly enough what lay behind this apparent act of grace towards themselves. They perceived that its real object was not to benefit them, but to legalize the proscribed Roman Catholic religion. But, with this reservation, they were thankful.

Bunyan was not only released, but he was duly licensed as a preacher. Here is a copy of that licence :

"Bedford Licence for John Bunyan to be a teacher in the House of Josias Roughed, 9 May, 1672.

CHARLES, etc.

To all Mayors, Bayliffs, Constables, and others.

Our Officers and Ministers, Civill and Military, whome it may concerne, Greeting. In Pursuance of our Declaration of the 15th of March 167½, Wee doe hereby permitt and licence John Bunyan to bee a Teacher of the Congregation allowed by Us in the House of Josias Roughed, Bedford, for the use of such as doe not conforme to the Church of England, who are of the Perswasion commonly called Congregationall. With further licence and permission to him the said John Bunyan to teach in any other place licensed by Us according to our said Declaration. Given at our Court at Whitehall, the 9th day of May in the 24th yeare of our Reigne 1672.

By his Ma^ties^ command,

ARLINGTON."

It does not seem to have been generally recog-

nized that alike the Declaration of Indulgence and the licensing of Preachers, or "Teachers" constituted an abuse of the Royal Prerogative, illegally overriding Parliamentary functions, and making towards an absolute monarchy. It was, in any case a subservient Parliament, amenable to what the King might please to do.

John Bunyan was elected to be pastor of the Dissenting Church of Congregationalists, or Baptists; and a move was made, following upon a further licence for a meeting-place, to secure such a home. The Declaration of Indulgence contained the admission of failure in the attempt to unify all men's religious practices, saying it was "evident by the sad experience of twelve yeares" that there is very little fruit of all these forceable courses. Therefore, it proceeded, "That there may be no pretence for any of Our Subjects to continue their illegall Meetings and Conventicles, Wee doe Declare, That Wee shall from time to tome allow a sufficient number of Places, as they shall be desired, in all parts of this Our Kingdom, for the use of such as doe not conform to the Church of England, to meete and assemble in, in Order to their Publick Worship and Devotion; which Places shall be open and free to all Persons."

On August 20th, 1672, a barn and the orchard in which it stood, in Mill Lane, were purchased by the congregation from Josias Ruffhead, for £50; Ruffhead, one of the congregation, being merely an intermediary, having himself purchased the property from Crompton, of Elstow. On the site of that barn now stands the Bunyan Chapel.

Brother Bunyan, pastor of this community that now had found a settled place of meeting, found his burning eloquence and his pastoral abilities so keenly appreciated that he was kept ever busy, not only in Bedford, but in visiting and preaching to the congregations in a very wide area. He is

found on one occasion holding meetings so far away as Leicester. "Bishop Bunyan" he came to be styled, by some in a kindly way, but maliciously by the Church of England adherents.

In these strenuous activities, and in the writing of his sermons and the many books that continued to employ his fertile imagination, there would be little time left for his trade. Nothing is definitely known about that; whether or when he ceased to work at his trade of a brazier and tinker; but it seems probable that his eldest son, John, who carried on business in that way in St. Cuthbert's parish, Bedford, until his death in 1728, succeeded his father.

Gone were the days of itinerant tinkering, it would seem, long before. Twelve years of Bedford Gaol, in any case, had settled that. And John, his son, appears to have been a tradesman in that line at rather a higher level.

What is claimed to be a personal relic of the great preacher was found in 1924, in the yard of a marine-store dealer at St. Neots. When cleaned, this rusty iron object was found to be a small anvil, bearing the incised inscription, "John Bunyan, Helstow," and the date 1647. That was Bunyan's nineteenth year. The genuine nature of this relic, it was said, was proved by the fact that the capital letters of which the inscription is formed agree in character with Bunyan's own writing, as seen in his copy of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* kept at Bedford in the Literary and Scientific Institute; a book which, with the Bible, formed his reading during that long imprisonment.

It would not be conclusive evidence, to show this likeness in writing, or imitation of printed characters, as the inscription really is: it would be easy enough to obtain access to the book, and to imitate the inscription in it. But the history of this anvil, although not complete, goes back a

considerable way, and there is little need to doubt its authentic nature.

The spelling "Helstow" does not necessarily prove that Bunyan misplaced his aspirates, for, as we later shall see, that is one of the forms in which the place-name, Elstow, once, and rightly too, was rendered. But the history of the anvil, so far as it has been or can be discovered, points to the genuine character of this find. One William Rowlett, when sorting over a heap of old ironmongery he had bought, found this object. His

BUNYAN'S ANVIL.

curiosity was aroused by noticing, under the rusted surface, traces of an inscription. Carefully he cleaned it; and eventually it was found that this was an old brazier's "stake" anvil. This was used by staking the pointed end in the ground. The history of it was traced back to 1865, when one Robert Chasty bought it, amongst some old iron, of an ironmonger, a Mr. Fisher, of Biggleswade, whose business descended from one founded in that town in 1800. The anvil now belongs to Mr. John Beagane, of Hitchin.

A "stake" anvil, wholly unlike the type of anvil used in a blacksmith's forge, was peculiarly the kind to be used by itinerant tinkers. Clearly it was of no use to a brazier and tinker who had a settled place of business; and so it must have

been cast aside. To-day, we treasure relics of great men ; but in those times they did nothing of the sort. They did not even wholly realize the greatness of their heroes, for there was then no perspective from which to view them and judge of their proportions.

CHAPTER IV

The Edworth incident—Agnes Beaumont—Bunyan's passionate vindication of himself—Re-arrest and imprisonment—Final release—A preacher in the highways and by-ways—Last years—Death in London—What manner of man was Bunyan?

IT was in the midst of Bunyan's great preaching activities in the years following the release in 1672 from his first imprisonment that a distressing happening, referred to by him in his *Grace Abounding*, occurred. No reference is found to it in the first edition of that book, for the sufficient reason that the work was first published in 1666, and that the incident did not take place until 1674.

At Edworth, between Baldock and Biggleswade, there then lived a farmer, one John Beaumont, a widower with an unmarried daughter, Agnes, aged twenty-one, keeping house for him. Close by, at other farms, lived a son and a daughter, both married. They were all among those who had been attracted to the religious communities which Bunyan served; but the old man, for his part, had changed his views and had become almost as bitterly against as he had been for them. There is in the British Museum a manuscript account by the daughter, Agnes Beaumont, of the whole affair. "My father," she says, "had heard him (Bunyan) preach God's word, and heard him with a broken heart, as had several others, and afterwards would cry to the Lord in secret, as well as I."

What caused the change of heart in the father seems to have been some of that idle and malicious

talk of which Bunyan himself tells us. At any rate, the farmer turned away from his profession, and was especially incensed against Bunyan. Agnes had been among the first to join the congregation at Gamlingay in 1672. Her name is written in its records by Bunyan himself, " Agniss Behemont."

On a February day in 1674 there was to be a meeting at Gamlingay, a village then called " Gamgay," across the Cambridgeshire border, and Agnes with great difficulty persuaded her father that she might attend. So to it she was to ride with one John Wilson, on horseback, seated, pillion-wise, behind him, as most women then did. Wilson, for some unexplained reason, did not appear, and her brother, who, with his wife, was going to the meeting in like manner, could not take away another horse from the farm-work.

The account generally received is that at that moment came Bunyan himself, riding a sturdy horse, and Agnes suggested he should take her. Bunyan objected: " Your father would be grievously angry if I should," he said. But he gave way to her appeals, and off they went ; with the father in the distance angrily capering about his fields.

The authentic account of this incident is much the same, with but one little variant. It is preserved in the British Museum Manuscripts Department (Egerton MSS. 2128) in a very neatly written little book, in a handwriting somewhat like that of an engrossing script. It is a book treating of the Divine dealings with Agnes Beaumont, later " Mrs. Story, the wife of a merchant at High-Gate." The book is not in her own handwriting.

She says, when she found no horse was to be had, " I fell a-weeping for fear I should not go." Soon after that, John Bunyan came riding up to her

brother's farm. " I must desire you to carry my sister to Gangay to-day, behind you," he said. " He answered my brother very roughly, and said ' No, no, I will not carry her.' These words, cutting words to me indeed, made me weep bitterly. My brother said to him again, ' If you do not carry her, you will break her heart ' ; and he replied the same words again, that he would not. He said, ' Your father would be grievously angry with me.' Said I, ' If you please to carry me, I will venture that.' "

Gamlingay is nine miles north-west of Edworth, through Sutton and Potton. On their way, they must needs have passed over Sutton Packhorse Bridge ; one of the not very numerous bridges which still survive in Bedfordshire from those times. It was an ancient bridge even when Agnes Beaumont and John Bunyan passed this way, and it is in itself beautiful, as well as being beautifully situated, just short of Sutton village. Here a little stream runs across the road, as a ford, or watersplash, fordable in summer, but not in winter, when the packhorses went in single file across the narrow bridge ; too narrow to admit of anything on wheels wider than a wheelbarrow, and very steep. It is a two-arched bridge, built of a dark brown sandstone in very large blocks, apparently in the fourteenth century. It is maintained from a portion of the annual income of the Marston Charity, of unknown age or origin, whose funds derive from rent charges on adjacent lands.

When Agnes returned from the Gamlingay meeting she found the door of her father's house locked against her, with her father at the window refusing to open unless she promised to break with these people. She would make no promise, and had to sleep the night in the barn, in her riding-dress. Next morning, she went over to the house

of her brother, and remained there till the next Lord's Day, when, considering it to be her duty, she returned home, prepared to yield to her father. On the Tuesday following, when in the house alone with him, her father died suddenly. At that same moment, in Baldock market, a clergyman, one Lane, was busily spreading malicious gossip of how he had seen John Bunyan and Agnes Beaumont riding together at Gamlingay town-end. There was a lawyer, too, one Farrow, a rejected suiter, who found an opportunity in this to vent all the spite of which rejected love is capable. " Jealousy is as cruel as the grave." He said Agnes Beaumont had poisoned her father with a potion that Bunyan had given her.

The affair created a great stir, and the funeral was put off until due enquiry had been made, and an inquest held. At that inquest it was established that John Beaumont had died from natural causes. But the accusations had been terrible. Agnes Beaumont wrote " I did not know how far God might suffer man and the devil to go. It also troubled me to think that in case I suffered, another as innocent as myself, must suffer too ; but the Lord knew our innocency in this affair, both in thought, in word, and in deed."

Agnes Beaumont, in after years Mrs. Story, went to live at Highgate, and died there in 1720, but was buried in the ground attached to the Tilehouse Street Chapel in Hitchin, where a tablet to her memory is to be seen.

The allusion in *Grace Abounding* to this incident is not specific, but covers the whole field of the vile defamations plentifully directed against him, from time to time. It is virile English, of the seventeenth century, and more than a little too forthright, no doubt, for the present age ; but it is couched in a noble spirit :

" It was reported with the boldest confidence

SUTTON PACKHORSE BRIDGE

that I had my Misses, my Whores, my Bastards, yea, two Wives at once, and the like. My foes have missed their mark in this their shooting at me. I am not the man. I wish that they themselves be guiltless. If all the Fornicators and Adulterers in England were hanged by the neck till they be dead, John Bunyan, the object of their envy, would still be alive and well. I bind these lies and slanders to me as an ornament ; it belongs to my Christian profession to be vilified, slandered,

THE BEAUMONT FARMHOUSE, EDWORTH.

reproached, and reviled ; and since all this is nothing else, as my God and my conscience do bear me witness, I rejoice in reproaches, for Christ's sake."

The farmhouse of the Beaumonts is still standing. It may be found a short way off the east side of the Great North Road, between Baldock and Biggleswade, two miles short of the last-named town. A turning marked for Edworth, opposite the "Plough" Inn, on that great highway leads in a quarter of a mile to it. Edworth, although it has a parish church, is much less than a village, for it consists of only a few very scattered farm-

houses and cottages, set amid the illimitable cabbage-fields of this tamest and flattest part of Bedfordshire. It will thus be noted that the scenery may scarcely be described as in any way inspiring.

The Beaumont farmhouse is now divided into two cottages. It stands within the remains of what once was a moat, completely encircling it and crossed once only by a bridge, which long since disappeared. The house is built of brick as to its lower part and plaster above. Old oak beams and ingle-nooks are in its two sitting-rooms.

Before the year 1675 was far spent, Bunyan again was in prison. It was on February 3rd that the preachers' licences were revoked by Royal Proclamation, and a new time of tribulation dawned for the dissenters. A warrant for the arrest of Bunyan was with all haste prepared, and dated March 4th, by which it would seem that Bunyan had ignored the withdrawal of his licence and had continued preaching. But he was not allowed much latitude before the law again had got hold of him. The haste with which this warrant was issued evidently was due to Bunyan's old enemy, Dr. William Foster, whose diligent malevolence Bunyan recognizes in the description he gives of him as a "right Judas." Foster was as powerful as he was malevolent; for he was an ecclesiastical lawyer, Chancellor of the Diocese of Lincoln, and Commissary of the Archdeaconry of Bedford.

This historic half-sheet of paper was discovered in 1887 among the manuscripts once belonging to Dr. Ichabod Chauncy, of Bristol, the "Nonconformists' Attorney-General," as he often was styled. Dr. Chauncy's descendants long kept his papers, treasuring them not so much because they were collectors, but for the reason that they thought a sum of about £1,000 might some day be

realized by their sale. They waited for the value of them to mature, so to say. Actually the sale did not bring quite so much ; but in the appreciation of prices in the interval between 1887 and the present, there can be no doubt that sum would be greatly exceeded, if that collection could by any possibility again be brought together, and sold.

The warrant, in excellent preservation, is rather formidably signed ; no fewer than thirteen magistrates having appended their signatures to this legal instrument for the apprehension and committal of the inoffensive preacher.

The warrant reads as under :

To the Constables of Bedford and to Every One of Them

Whereas information and complaint is made unto us that notwithstanding the King's Maj^ties late Act of most gracious generall and free pardon to all his subjects for past misdemeanour, that by his said clemencie and indulgent grace and favour they might bee mooved and induced for the time to come more carefully to observe his Highness lawes and statutes, and to continue in their loyall and due obedience to his Maj^tie, yet one John Bunyan of your said towne, Tynker, hath divers times within one month last past in contempt of his Maj^ties good laws preached or teached at a Conventicle meeteing or assembly under colour or pretence of exercise of Religion in other manner then according to the Liturgie or Practise of the Church of England. These are therefore in his Maj^ties name to command you forthwith to apprehend and bring the Body of the said John Bunnion beefore us or any of us or other his Maj^ties Justice of Peace within the said county to answer the premises and further to do and to faile not. Given our handes and seales the ffowerth day of March in the seaven and twentieth yeare of the Raigne of

our most gracious Soveraigne Lord King Charles the Second, A°. g^m. D^ni. juxta gr : 1674 (1675)."

The gaol in which Bunyan passed the next six months or more was the gatehouse on Bedford Bridge. That was the " den " in which he slept and dreamt his allegory. The old bridge, one of five arches, with two gatehouses ; the north one being the borough gaol, was taken down in 1811, and replaced by the present bridge.

On February 6th, 1685, died Charles the Second, a King to whom the English people have forgiven much for his gift of humour. They have much to forgive. The sovereign who said " Presbyterianism was no religion for a gentleman," was a sly Romaniser ; one who deluded Bunyan himself with his clement Declaration of Indulgence that released such as he and graciously permitted him to exercise the calls of his own conscience. The King who succeeded the " Merry Monarch " could not be styled a man of any merry moments. In his own way of thinking he was as sour a fanatic as the most embittered Puritan could be, and stupidly determined to thrust his own Roman Catholic belief upon a nation that would have none of it, even though a submissive Parliament might yield.

The times boded ill for Nonconformists. Men looked to their weapons. Men were cast into prison, or deprived of their places under the State. Bunyan was alarmed for himself and for his family, and in December of that year he executed a deed making over all his property to his wife ; for who could know but that the King would have his way, or that the days of the Marian persecution return, the goods of people obnoxious to the Catholics be seized, and themselves martyred.

But this fear, although it was intense, and lasted for a space of two years, was not realized ; and on

April 4th, 1687, the King resorted to the old device of his brother, a Declaration of Indulgence. This, while it removed all penal statutes and laws against Nonconformists, included among the nonconforming the Roman Catholics he really intended to benefit. Those who then became alarmed were the Church of England clergy. But Bunyan's last years were thereby rendered peaceful ones of preaching and pastoral visits, wholly unhindered by Acts of Parliament or arbitrary decrees.

Indeed, so strangely altered had become the times that the Nonconformists, against whom the State and the governing classes had ranged themselves, now found themselves courted, both by the Church of England and by the Roman Catholics, for their support, although they had been held to be "utter enemies to the King's person, crown, and monarchy." But now that all religious disabilities were removed, it was thought to secure their assistance in implementing that liberty. The Dissenters, greatly to their astonishment, found the Roman Catholics, who not so long before had hinted not obscurely at faggot and stake, and the Church of England supporters, who were all for imprisonment and banishment, calling them their dear friends, and hoping they would help them one against the other. The Dissenters were now in much the position of a political Third Party, between two others which were equally matched and could not prevail against one another without the aid of an ally. The King, whose ultimate aim was Roman Catholic ascendancy, and who had already removed Lords Lieutenants of Counties and magistrates obnoxious to his views and replaced them with servile supporters, now by his ministers removed from their places other men, and placed in their stead numbers of those sturdy nonconforming persons who had withstood persecution. By arbitrary mandates the

Corporation of Bedford itself was reconstituted, and Councillors and Aldermen appointed who were wholly of Bunyan's persuasion. Bunyan himself, by this time the most important man in Bedfordshire religious affairs, was sounded as to whether he would accept some Government post ; but the suggestion came to nothing. For, if the King could now at will suspend and re-appoint those whose views were not agreeable to him, what was there in this new absolutism to prevent another of the many reversals of policy from which already they had suffered ?

So matters drifted, and Bunyan and his fellows stood aside, going their own ways, and willing enough that others should go theirs. Their kingdom was not of this world.

But Bunyan's plough was drawing to its last furrow. He was a few months short of sixty years of age, and active as ever, with many works still going to press and his pastoral visits filling a busy life. Had it not been for a mischance, he would have had years of life yet before him. He preached in London, as occasionally he had done years before, when thousands came to hear him, in Red Cross Street, Moorfields, and later at Zoar Chapel in Zoar Street, Southwark, which was the freehold of Dr. Thomas Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln. Even in those few years of Charles the Second's Declaration of Indulgence, he was a great attraction as a preacher whenever he came to London, and people of every quality crossed the river to hear him. The fame of it came to the notice of the King, who said to his Chaplain, Dr. Owen, " I marvel such a learned man as you can sit and listen to an illiterate tinker." To which, Dr. Owen replied : " Your Majesty, if I could have the tinker's power, I would give all my learning to get hold of it."

" In Southwark," says Bunyan himself, " I

compute that three thousand came on one Lord's Day, and in such crowds that I was fain to enter at a back door, to be pulled almost over the people to get to the pulpit."

Bunyan's last journey was undertaken as the mission of a peacemaker. He rode, in August, 1688, from Bedford to Reading. "It so falling out that a young gentleman, a neighbour of Mr. Bunyan, happening into the displeasure of his father, and being much troubled in mind upon that account, as also for that he had heard his father proposed to disinherit him, or otherwise deprive him of what he had to leave, he pitched upon Mr. Bunyan as a fit man to make way for his submission and prepare his father's mind to receive him; and he, as willing to do any good office as it could be requested, as readily undertook it. He used such pressing arguments and reasons against anger and passion, as also for love and reconciliation, that the father was mollified."

Having made this successful appeal, he rode direct from Reading, all the way to London, on an August day that, in the strange vagaries of our climate, was cold and wet; and when he reached the house of his friend, John Strudwick, a grocer carrying on business at the sign of the "Star" on Snow Hill, he was wet to the skin. On August 19th, he preached what proved to be his last sermon at Whitechapel. On the Tuesday following, he was taken with what seems to have been a violent, feverish cold. From the developments of this he died on August 31st.

He was living at this time under an interval of religious liberty of whose duration no man might be certain. He died a few months before James the Second was deposed after the landing of William of Orange at Brixham, on November 5th, succeeding that last of the Stuarts as "the Protestant Deliverer."

John Bunyan was buried, not where by sentiment we would choose, at Elstow, or at Bedford, but in that Campo Santo of Nonconformity, Bunhill Fields, that grim, vast burial-ground at Finsbury, without the City wall. There, over the spot where he lies, is an altar-tomb on which, after the manner of an age earlier than his own, when recumbent effigies had become no longer the inevitable fashion, lies stretched a full-length figure representing him. Exposed to the weather as this figure is, it has of recent years been necessary to renew it.

What manner of man, it will be asked, was this sturdy Nonconformist, John Bunyan, in appearance? Was he as forthright and sturdy in his build and carriage as in all his sayings and doings?

It is often extremely difficult for us to determine the personal appearance of men who lived so long ago. We have no entirely satisfactory portraiture of Shakespeare; either by description or in pictured form; but we can envisage him pretty well. In the case of Bunyan we can do better, for we have three portraits of him, taken in his lifetime, and two personal sketches of him by two men who knew him well.

Each of the three portraits is a likeness taken of Bunyan in his last years. No portrait of him as a young man is known. The earliest of these three likenesses is the most engaging, and, as we like to think, the most life like. We have every right to think this because of the technical quality of the artist's work, to be gauged to some extent in a reproduction; or to be seen at first hand by any who may have the will to it, for the original survives and is in the collections in the Prints and Drawing Department of the British Museum. The artist, Robert White, was the most active and prolific of all in drawing likenesses of notable men in that age. For some forty years he was at

JOHN BUNYAN.
From the portrait by Sadler.

work in this way ; and no fewer than two hundred and seventy-five such portraits by him have been traced. He was a pupil of Loggan and in many instances excelled his master in the quality and truth of his work. He had, it was said, " a wonderful power to take the air of a face." His portrait-sketch of Bunyan taken in 1679, is in pencil, on vellum ; a piece of material six by four inches. It is in the Cracherode Collection, left to the British Museum by the Rev. Clayton M. Cracherode, who died in 1799.

From that piece of vellum there looks out to you the countenance of a man whose glance in frank and steady. His eyes are those of one who fears none but God. They are brilliant ; they are those of a man that has a sense of humour ; and they shine with an inner light. Here is no sour Mawworm, but one happy in his religion. The eyes spiritualize a fine face ; that of a well-set up man, in robust health.

This portrait was made at the time when Bunyan's name had leapt into popularity ; when he first became known to the country in general, with the immediate success of his immortal allegory.

A portrait in oil, made in 1685 by Sadler, and now in the National Portrait Gallery, is far less satisfactory. It portrays him rather more like a farmer, and produces the effect of it being the likeness of a short man ; one well satisfied with himself and a little commonplace. The third portrait appears to be no longer known in its original, but only in engravings from it. The first of these engravings is that by Sturt, forming the frontispiece to the first folio edition of Bunyan's works, issued in 1692.

To complete a portraiture of Bunyan we have this pen portrait, written by his friend, George Cokayn, minister of the congregation at Red Cross Street in the City of London :

" As for his person, he was tall of stature, strong-boned, though not corpulent, somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes, wearing his hair on his upper lip, after the old British fashion ; his hair reddish, but in his latter days sprinkled with grey ; his nose well set, but not declining or bending, and his mouth moderately large ; his forehead something high, and his habit always plain and modest."

To this we may add the words of John Wilson, who for many a year had known him intimately :

" His countenance was grave and sedate, and did so to the life discover the inward frame of his heart that it was convincing to the beholders and did strike something of awe into them that had nothing of the fear of God."

Such was he of whom in a later generation Cowper wrote so enthusiastically. Cowper himself knew what it was to be under the dread of being a lost soul. It will be noticed that, in referring to Bunyan, he does not mention his name, and that he gives his reason why :

> I name thee not, lest so despised a name
> Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame
> Revere the man whose Pilgrim marks the road
> And guides the Progress of the soul to God !

So we perceive that, even in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the name of the inspired allegorist might have been held " despised." In our own times, whether as a leader in religious life, or as one who employed the purest style of English writing, there are none who do not render him the honour that is his due.

CHAPTER V

LANDMARKS OF "THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS"

The "Slough of Despond" identified—Risinghoe—Elstow Place

"AS I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a Den, and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept, I dreamed a dream."

Thus does John Bunyan introduce to us his immortal allegory. He grips the attention of the reader at once, and he never lets go of him until the story is told. He shares with the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, and with Robert Louis Stevenson in our own time, this compelling power. He is a very prince of story-tellers.

We know where the dreamer dreamt. It was in Gaol on Bedford Bridge. He saw in that vision, as it were, a man clothed in rags, praying and trembling and crying "What shall I do?" The man went home to his wife and children, and, telling them that their city would be burned and overthrown, told them he was bound on pilgrimage from it. He had in his hand a book, and on his back a grievous burden. This man in the book is Christian. He is no less Bunyan himself, as we may perceive in reading his spiritual struggles in *Grace Abounding*. So, bidding farewell to wife and children and to kin and friends, Christian sets forth upon his journey. Some think a "crazy distemper has got into his head"; but Evangelist knows otherwise, and urging him to flee from the City of Destruction, points out to him the way. There he showed him the far-off light which will

show him through the wicket-gate. So Christian is on his way. The neighbours think him one possessed of strong delusions ; and Obstinate and Pliable follow, to fetch him back by force. Here are the two first of the personified vices, errors, and virtues with which the pages of *The Pilgrim's Progress* abound. Hopeful, Faithful, Demas, Mr. By-Ends, and the inimitable jury ; Mr. No-Good, Mr. Hate-Light, Mr. Blind-man, Mr. Implacable, Mr. Love-lust, Mr. Live-loose, Mr. Heady, Mr. High-mind, Mr. Enmity, Mr. Liar, Mr. Cruelty, and Mr. Malice. Bunyan's picturesque invention in these matters is delightful.

" Come away," says Christian, to Obstinate and Pliable. But they will not with him, nor will Christian return. So he journeys along the plain, but Pliable, true to the name Bunyan has given him does indeed desert Obstinate and come away with Christian.

So they journey towards Immanuel's Land ; but presently they fall into a " very miry slough that was in midst of the plain," and they, being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the slough was Despond. Here, therefore, they wallowed for a time being grievously bedaubed with the dirt. Pliable, at this, has had enough. " May I get out again with my life " says he. " you shall possess the brave country alone, for me." So he struggled out and went away, and Christian saw him no more.

Christian struggled to get out of the slough on that side that was farthest from his home, but by reason of his burden he could not. Then there came a man named Help and asked him what he did there.

" Sir," said Christian, " I was bid go this way by a man called Evangelist, who directed me also to yonder gate, that I might escape the wrath to come ; and as I was going thither, I fell in here."

DUNSTABLE DOWNS, LOOKING SOUTH, ON THE HOLYHEAD ROAD:
SITE OF THE "SLOUGH OF DESPOND."

"But," said Help, "why did you not look for the steps?"

"Fear," replied Christian, "followed me so hard that I fled the next way and fell in."

Help plucked Christian out of the slough, and set him on his way. "Then," pursues the narrator, "I stepped to him that plucked him out, and said, 'Sir, wherefore since over this place is the way from the City of Destruction to yonder gate, why is it that this place is not mended, that poor travellers might go thither with more security?'

"And he said unto me, 'This miry slough is such a place as cannot be mended; it is the descent whither the scum and filth that attends conviction for sin doth continually run; and therefore it is called the Slough of Despond; for still, as the sinner is awakened about his last condition, there ariseth in his soul many fears, and doubts, and discouraging apprehensions which all of them get together, and settle in this place. And this is the reason of the badness of this ground. It is not the pleasure of the King that this place should remain so bad. His labourers also have, by the direction of His Majesty, been for above these sixteen hundred years employed about this patch of ground, if perhaps it might have been mended; yea, and to my knowledge, here have been swallowed up at least twenty thousand cart-loads, yea, millions of wholesome instructions that have, at all seasons, been brought from all places of the King's dominions, and they that can tell say they are the best materials to make good ground of the place; if so be it might have been mended, but it is the Slough of Despond still, and so will be when they have done what they can.'"

We can, as it happens, with certainty identify this "Slough of Despond" with an actual place in Bedfordshire. The slough, that "very miry place," is not, it is true, now in existence, for the

King's surveyors have indeed "done what they can," and that is much indeed. They have abolished the bog that we are told must ever remain.

The site of this real slough, which must greatly have impressed Bunyan on his journeys, was on the Holyhead Road, north of Dunstable, on the way to Hockliffe. The appearance of this old coaching road at this point has been greatly altered since then. It was about 1825, when Telford, surveying and altering this great highway, came to Dunstable. Then he made the deep cutting through the hill that we now see, to ease the gradient of the road and so lighten the pull-up for the coach-horses. The chalk hills here, Dunstable Downs, are a part of the Chiltern Hills. The chalky sides of the cutting rise up like cliffs on either side of the road, to a height of some forty or fifty feet. There is but one such road-cutting deeper in England: that through the shoulder of Butser Hill, on the Portsmouth Road.

The old steep and narrow way thus gave place to the broad and easy highway. Formerly, the corresponding descent was precipitous, and led down to a deep and watery valley. The route on to Hockliffe was very marshy, past the spot marked on maps "Puddlehill." Past this point run the beginnings of the little river Ouzel. In the seventeenth century, as we read in the literature of that time, this valley and long stretches of the road were notoriously bad. There may have been other places almost equally boggy; but this was an infinitely greater travelled route; and so we hear more about it. "A dirty way leads you to Hockley, alias Hockley-in-the-Hole," says Ogilby, in his *Britannia Depicta*, that great folio volume descriptive of our roads, published in 1675. It seems to have become even worse during the next few years, for Celia Fiennes, a lady who travelled

much in England at that time, and rode a horse long distances through the country—a very enterprising lady indeed—confiding her adventures to her diary in 1695, tells us of " seven miles over a sad road, called Hockley in ye Hole, as full of deep slows as in ye winter it must be Empasable."

This vale, in fact, received all the surface-water draining from the sides of the Downs, as well as having the beginnings of the Ouzel.

Here then we have the original of Bunyan's " Slough of Despond." He knew that line of country well, and as it is situated on the main road, he must often have travelled it and no doubt been mired in the slough. When Help remarks that the Slough of Despond is in a descent where the scum and filth attending conviction of sin ran, that was the mystic and figurative religious way of referring to the drainings into this hollow from the hills. Apart from the religious significance of the sixteen hundred years in which the King's surveyors had been endeavouring to abolish the slough—a period which then corresponded with the length of the Christian era—we have the corresponding significance that this is the ancient Watling Street, the Roman road, dating from approximately the like years. The identification is therefore complete ; and it is to the present writer a matter for surprise that no one hitherto has collated these evidences and so made this interesting literary discovery.

Bunyan, in putting into the mouth of Help the observation that this will still be the Slough of Despond when the King's surveyors have done what they can, was wrong ; for, here is no longer any slough. When Telford had made his cutting the " spoil " (as engineers style the excavated material) was dumped into the slough, in the form of an embankment across the valley, and thus raised, the road runs across. Looking backwards,

to the south, after having crossed it, we see the great white gash of the cutting through the chalk, and the hills on either side.

This is the Bedfordshire "Hundred of Manshead," a mysterious name whose meaning no county historian seems to have been able to deduce. It greatly piques one's curiosity. But it is really not beyond our competence to offer a likely solution. Spelt originally, "Mansheved," the word obviously is cognate with that of "Dunsheved," which was the name of Launceston, in Cornwall. It means "hillhead." The ancient Hundreds were named after the most remarkable local geographical features within their boundaries. At those places, thus easily identified, were held the folk-moots; the open-air councils of those remote ages. What, then, is the most striking feature in this Hundred of Manshead? It is the great prehistoric earthwork of "Maiden Bower," which we see from this point, on the skyline of the downs; "Magdenburgh," the "Great Hill Fort." That, it would seem, is the feature whence the Hundred of Manshead took its singular title.

Christian, on his pilgrimage, next meets with Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who asks him whither he goes, and directs him out of his way as pointed out by Evangelist, and tells him he must go to the house of Mr. Legality, who lives in the village of Morality. Mr. Legality, he says, has great skill in the removing of burdens, even so grievous an one as that under which Christian groans; and if so be Mr. Legality is not at home, why then, his son, Civility, who is a pretty young man, can do it as well as the old gentleman himself. Either of these can relieve those who are somewhat crazed in their wits by reason of their burdens; so why go the way in which weariness, painfulness, hunger, perils, nakedness, sword, lions, dragons, darkness, and, in a word, death, are to be encountered?

RISINGHOE : "MOUNT SINAI."

So Christian went towards Morality, but when he got nigh to it, there he saw a hill that overhung the way so that he was afraid it would fall on him; and out of the hill came flashes of fire, so that he dreaded to be burned. He was sorry then that he had taken the advice of Mr. Worldly Wiseman.

That hill we identify with a remarkable hill, artificial in origin, beside the river Ouse, on its left bank, three miles below Bedford. It is not, of course, of the stupendous height indicated in the story, nor could fire issue from it. We must allow, as always, for Bunyan's imagination. It is indeed, moderate as a hill and very large for a mound; but it owns a highly picturesque name. It is the place called Risinghoe, at Castle Mills. Although by no means an impressive feature in the landscape, it is found, on a near approach, to be exceedingly steep, and is so covered with dense brushwood as to be unclimbable except by the most determined. Risinghoe, or "Castle Hill"—whence the adjoining flour-mills are named—is thought to have been thrown up by British or Saxon defenders of the river; possibly by the Saxons in A.D. 921, when the invading Danes, encamped at Tempsford, three miles lower down, after navigating the lower Ouse, lay, threatening Bedford. But it is, in all likelihood, far older. Some have considered it to have been used as a signalling station in remote British times, when fire signals commonly were used from such heights.

At this moment, when Christian daunted by those flashes of fire, knew not next what to do, he again espied Evangelist. Christian blushed for shame, and Evangelist, chiding him not too harshly, explained how Mr. Legality "is the son of the bond woman which now is, and is in bondage with her children." The hill, he added, was Mount Sinai. If the bond woman, asks Evangelist, is with her children in bondage, how canst thou

expect to be set free by them? No man ever yet was set free by Legality, nor ever is like to be. Mr. Legality is a cheat, and, as for his son, Civility, notwithstanding his simpering looks, he is but a hypocrite.

Christian then, by the advice of Evangelist, turned back into the true path, and in process of time he came to the wicket-gate, over which was written, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." After his knocking more than once or twice there came to the gate a grave person, named Good-will, who asked who was there, whence he came, and what he would have. Christian told him, and Good-will pulled him sharply in, as he was entering. "What means that?" asked Christian; and Good-will told him "A little distance from this gate there is erected a strong castle, of which Beezlebub is the captain; from thence he and they that are with him shoot arrows at them that come up, if haply they may die before they enter in.

Good-will then directs Christian on his way to the House of the Interpreter. Reaching it, he knocked again and again, and at last there came one and asked his business in that place. Christian spoke boldly up and said he would speak with the master of the house, and so he was led to him. The Interpreter showed Christian many mysteries, both joyful and sad, and all full of significance. The Interpreter also took him by the hand, and led him into "a pleasant place where was builded a stately palace, beautiful to behold." And the Interpreter showed him many more things, before he set him upon his way.

By "the Interpreter" Bunyan clearly meant to indicate William Gifford, first pastor of the dissenting church, to whom he went when so troubled spiritually, and who received him into their communion. The "House of the Interpreter" is

RUINS OF ELSTOW PLACE: THE "STATELY PALACE."

the rectory, still standing, of St. John Baptist, Bedford.

The " stately palace " is a composite picture of two beautiful country houses that Bunyan well knew : Elstow Place, the house of the Hillersdons, and the even more ornate mansion at Houghton Conquest.

Elstow Place, built by Sir Thomas Hillersdon, was yet new in Bunyan's youth. It was exactly the kind of place to capture his imagination, and that of the villagers in general ; for its Renaissance architecture was in those days a new fashion, contrasting strongly with the Gothic of the church, its immediate neighbour ; and it was, in fact, exceptionally fine in detail, as the porch of the existing ruins sufficiently proves. Its delicate stone sculpture still exhibits the Hillersdon arms, three bulls' heads on a chevron, and the fantastic masks show as clearly as when first cut.

CHAPTER VI

Across the plains to the Hill Difficulty—The House Beautiful: Houghton House—Ampthill—The Valley of the Shadow: Millbrook and its ravines.

SO Christian made ready to resume his journey, saying joyfully, and yet with a sense of what perils he must encounter:

Here I have seen things rare and profitable,
Things pleasant, dreadful, things to make one stable
In what I have begun to take in hand;
Then let me think on them, and understand
Wherefore they showed me more, and let me be
Thankful, O good Interpreter, to thee.

He ran on, coming to a point where there was a place somewhat ascending, where there was a cross, and a little below it, a sepulchre; and as he drew near to the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders and fell off his back, and came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and he saw it no more.

"Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, 'He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death.' Then the Three Shining Ones saluted him, stripped him of his rags, and set a mark on his forehead, and gave him a roll with a seal upon it, and bade him look as he ran for the Celestial Gate."

But the pilgrim was as yet only at the beginnings of his troubles. As he ran, he saw three men fast asleep near the wayside. They were Simple, Sloth, and Presumption, and they had fetters upon their heels. Christian pointed out the dangers of lying there, where one who was as a raging lion might come and destroy them; but

they answered each after the manner indicated by their names, and Christian went his way. We are not told what happened to the three; but we fear the worst.

Then, as Christian went along this narrow way, bounded on either side by a high wall, he saw Formality and Hypocrisy come tumbling over the wall, into the way. He reasoned with them, when they said they also were bound for the Celestial City, and told them that, as they had not come in by the gate, they were trespassers against the Lord of the City. But they had come from the land of Vain-glory, and were not to be argued with at a profit. So they went on, until they came to the bottom of the Hill Difficulty, where there was a spring. There were three ways up the hill: one each to right and left, but the narrow way went straight up. Christian drank of the spring, and went up the narrow way, but Hypocrisy and Formality, seeing how steep was that, and imagining that the right and left ways rejoined at the top of the hill, took, one the other, "Now, the name of one of these ways was Danger, and the name of the other Destruction. So the one took the way which is called Danger, which led him into a great wood, and the other took directly up the way to Destruction, which led him into a wide field, full of dark mountains, where he stumbled and fell, and rose no more."

But Christian kept straight on. He ran, and as the way grew steeper, he walked, and at length came to clambering up, on hands and knees. Reaching the top he rested in an arbour which the Lord of the city had made there for pilgrims. There he read in his roll, to refresh his spirit. And so presently he fell asleep, until it was almost night. Then came one who waked him, and bade him go on. So he went, and as he went, he met Mistrust and Timorous, who told him there were

lions in the path, and that they were afraid and would go back. They went, but Christian went forward, for he knew that to return to the City of Destruction meant certain death, while, though it might mean death to advance, yet there was a hope.

There are several difficult hills in this country of *The Pilgrim's Progress*; but they are in the Chiltern range, a little way farther south. The hill Bunyan here had in mind is merely a gentle rise, some six miles south of Elstow, on the way to Ampthill. The road rises between Ampthill Park on the right, and Houghton Park on the left. These beautifully wooded demesnes, with their ancient timber, were flourishing parks in Bunyan's day, and I like to think that he had as a model for his "arbour" on the hillside a gazebo, one of those summer-houses, or look-out places which of old great personages loved to erect at points commanding a view.

Presently we shall find no difficulty in establishing the likelihood of several of such arbours and gazebos on this hillside in Bunyan's time. Coming up the road, the old park of Ampthill, once containing Ampthill Castle, which was the residence of Katharine of Aragon at the time when the Commissioners of Henry the Eighth brought her the decree of divorce which Cranmer was zealous in obtaining, to please his master, we may, if we will, enter, and see there, on the site of that vanished castle, the Gothic cross erected in 1773, designed by Essex for Lord Ossory, with the lines by Horace Walpole:

> In days of old, here Ampthill's towers were seen.
> The mournful refuge of an injured Queen.
> Here flowed her pure and unavailing tears,
> Here blinded zeal sustained her sinking years.
> Yet Freedom hence her radiant banner waved,
> And love avenged a realm by priests enslaved
> From Katharine's wrongs a nation's bliss was spread,
> And Luther's light from Henry's lawless bed.

RUINS OF HOUGHTON MANOR HOUSE: THE "HOUSE BEAUTIFUL."

On the opposite, or eastern, side of the road was Houghton Park. It has long been disparked and is now a series of meadows, in which we may yet dimly trace remains of the terraced gardens which once adorned it ; just as we may see the stately ruins of Houghton House.

The manor of Houghton, anciently a property of the St. Amands, whose castle was at Cainhoe, belonged in 1415 to Dame Eleanor St. Amand, and the park long was known as " Dame Ellen's-bury." In the course of time it came into possession of the Crown, and we find that in 1605 James the First gave it to Sir Edmund Conquest ; who some ten years later sold it to the widowed Lady Pembroke, that great and accomplished lady who, being Mary Sidney, of Penshurst, was sister of that poet and gallant gentleman, Sir Philip Sidney, who died so gallantly at the siege of Zutphen.

The widowed Countess at once began to build on her manor. She employed the foremost architect of the day, none other than Inigo Jones, to provide for her a lordly pleasure-house which should do justice alike to her wealth and acknowledged taste ; and on the hill-top he accordingly erected what must have been the finest residence in Bedfordshire. It was built of red brick and stone and terra-cotta, and although its ruins are now far gone in decay, we can have skill enough to see how large and how architecturally fine it was.

The site is an exceptionally fine one. The north front of the house commanded views over the vale of Bedford, and the south looked upon the Chiltern Hills, some five miles distant. The house was an oblong of 122 feet by 76 feet, the longer side ranging from east to west, thus presenting a noble south front to the sun. It is the west front, however, which, in its ruined state, has now the greater pictorial qualities. Here you see the

south-west angle-tower, still complete, up to its second-floor windows and the pillared loggia with its Doric columns supporting an ornately sculptured frieze, profusely decorated with the heraldic devices of the families with which the Countess of Pembroke was connected ; the Bear and Ragged Staff of the Dudleys, the Pheon or head of the crossbow-bolt of the De L'Isles ; and the Sidney Porcupine. The style of this architectural composition was a curious and interesting admixture of Renaissance, Tudor, and Gothic, not in the more usual Inigo Jones manner, and the house, when in its prime must have been very beautiful; so that we need not feel the least hesitation in identifying it with the House Beautiful of Bunyan's story.

Lady Pembroke was in residence at Houghton in 1621, and entertained the King there, but soon after that she was dead. In 1630 Houghton came into the hands of the Bruce family, and became the residence of Christian, Countess of Devonshire ; a daughter of Lord Edward Bruce, of Kinloss. This lady, cast in the heroic mould in which not a few of the distinguished great ladies of that age were shaped, lived here for some three years with her brother, the Earl of Elgin. We are told that, after the final overthrow of the Royalist cause at the Battle of Worcester, she at once " lightened her griefs and her expenses " in so doing. She was that defiant great dame who, like another, would not bow to Cromwellian domination ; at any rate, not completely. Up in the remote Peak of Derbyshire she built in 1657 the church of Peak Forest, and dedicated it to " Charles, King and Martyr," somewhat of a rash deed in Commonwealth times. During her residence at Houghton, this ardent Royalist lady was wanted in London, where

HOUGHTON MANOR HOUSE, THE "HOUSE BEAUTIFUL," IN ITS PRIME.

probably she would have heard of something not to her advantage, had she not successfully bribed the captain of horse whose troop had been sent to convey her to the Council of State; or, as some would have it, she bribed even one of the Council. Let us credit her with bribing both. What some of the embattled great ladies on either side in the Civil War had done during the conflict, she pursued after it by intrigue, and the Royalists in Bedfordshire knew Houghton as a centre for plottings and schemings. One of her confidants was that Dr. George Lawson, who had been evicted from the living of Mears Ashby in Northamptonshire, to whom a tablet in Millbrook church was erected, and still may be seen there. This lady's nephew in the fullness of time reigned in her stead at Houghton, and was an important personage; nothing less than Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire. Robert Bruce—for that was his name—was a son of the Earl of Elgin. In 1668 he was created Viscount Bruce of Ampthill and Earl of Ailesbury. Politician and soldier too, he was a man of culture as well. He collected antiquities, and had a taste in literature. In 1685 he died and was buried in the church at Ampthill.

Houghton changed ownership in 1758, when John, fourth Duke of Bedford, purchased it from the first Earl of Ailesbury of the second creation. The intention of the Duke was to provide a residence suitable for his son and heir, the young Marquis of Tavistock, who six years later married the Lady Elizabeth Keppel. Three years after his marriage, the young Marquis, duly installed at Houghton, was killed when returning from hunting, by a fall from his horse, March 1767, in view of his young wife, who was looking from one of the western loggias of the mansion. In less than a year she died. Francis, the son of the young Marquis became in due course fifth Duke. He, too,

came to a tragic end; for he was killed by the blow of a tennis-ball, in 1802. In 1794 he had, for whatever reason, whether because he disliked the place as his father came by an untimely end there, or perhaps because his ducal residence, Woburn Abbey, sufficed him, dismantled this beautiful house. There was no effort made to sell it. The roof was torn off, and the fittings dispersed. It is said that the "Swan" hotel at Bedford, the great old coaching house by Bedford bridge, was built partly from some of the materials of Houghton. They could have been merely building materials of the most commonplace kind and not any of the decorative work; for the "Swan" is the very last word in plainness.

Portions of the decorative adjuncts of Houghton are to be seen here and there in Ampthill; notably a very fine stretch of decorative wrought-iron railing in Church Street; while one of its ornate garden arbours is in the great park-like garden of the mansion in the same street, at present the residence of Professor Richardson.

And so the "House Beautiful" ever since has been allowed to fall further into ruin. No one has ever put forth a hand to save it, for it was still the property of the Russells, Dukes of Bedford. The land, too, was disparked, and for long years past, any who would might, and may yet, roam about this once well-kept demesne.

It was in Bunyan's own time that the cultured Earl of Ailesbury was residing at Houghton. His pilgrim, Christian, in whom sometimes he saw himself, ascended to the House Beautiful, as he must often have done, from Elstow; and have seen as we have surmised, real arbours, with seats, or as he would say, settles, where one might rest. The garden-house, arbour, or gazebo, brought from Houghton, which may be seen in the garden of the house in Church Street, Ampthill, can scarce

be one that Bunyan could have seen. It appears to be not of earlier date than the reign of Queen Anne; some twenty years later than his time. But it doubtless was one of several; some of them older. It is, at any rate, an interesting survival, and is in perfect preservation. It appears to be

ARBOUR FROM HOUGHTON, NOW AT AMPTHILL.

chiefly of Baltic pine, not a remarkable fact, for such pine was imported so far back as the time of Queen Elizabeth, and, it may be, even earlier. The design is of the classic kind typical of the period; and in plan it is a demi-pentagon. Altogether, a very elaborate and beautiful work.

When Christian was come up the hill-side toward the House Beautiful, he entered into a narrow passage, leading in a furlong's length to

the porter's lodge ; and looking carefully before him, as he went, he espied in the path two lions. He did not see that the lions were chained, and he was afraid. But the porter at the lodge, whose name was Watchful, seeing that Christian was fain to go back, for fear of the lions, bade him keep in midst of the path and no harm should come to him. So, heeding the words of the porter, he went carefully, and the lions did him no hurt. So he came to the gate where the porter was.

It is quite plain what was the origin of this passage. Bunyan, as a boy, went with his father about the country, at the trade of a tinker, mending household goods ; and on one of these errands came hither, approaching the house at its eastern side, where the porter's lodge and the domestic offices would be situated. The narrow passage probably was actually in existence ; but the lions ? We do not find lions in Bedfordshire, nor is it in the least likely that Lord Ailesbury kept a menagerie, with lions in it. If we are right in suggesting that Bunyan's description of Christian's approach to the House Beautiful is in any way descriptive, then it is a very boyish reminiscence of an occasion when great dogs kept to guard a house might very well be as terrible as lions. The tinker and his son would certainly approach by way of the porter's lodge, and just as certainly the good house-dogs would make a fierce show and an alarming noise.

The House, said the porter, in reply to Christian's question, was built by the Lord of the hill, and he built it for the relief and security of pilgrims. Whither, the porter asked, was he going ? To which Christian replied that he was come from the City of Destruction and was going to Mount Zion ; but the sun was now set, and he desired to lodge there for the night.

The porter rang a bell and there answered it a

grave and beautiful damsel, named Discretion, who called others of the family ; Prudence, Piety and Charity. He followed them into the house. The pilgrim lay that night in a large upper chamber of the House Beautiful, whose window opened toward the sun rising.

In the morning, " after some discourse, they told him that he should not depart till they had shown him the rareties of the place. And first they had him into the study, where they showed him records of the greatest antiquity, in which, as I remember in my dream, they showed him first the pedigree of the lord of the hill. Here also were several other histories of many other famous things . . . The next day they took him and had him into the armoury, where they showed him all manner of furniture . . . as sword, shield, helmet, breast-plate."

In *The Pilgrim's Progress* these things have each and all their symbolic religious significance ; but the actual rareties, the pedigree of the lord of the hill and the collections of armour, were those family possessions and the collections of antiquities belonging to Lord Ailesbury, the collector and man of cultivated tastes. Bunyan at some time or another, it would seem, must have been shown, as no doubt other visitors, gentle or simple, would have been, in the absence of the family, the treasures stored in the House Beautiful. Houghton was, in short, what we would in our own times call a " show-place," open by courtesy of the owner to the inspection and admiration of reputable callers.

" Then I saw in my dream, that on the morrow, he got up to go forward ; but they desired him to stay till the next day also ; and then, said they, we will, if the day be clear, show you now the Delectable Mountains," which, they said, would yet further add to his comfort, because they were

nearer the desired haven than the place where at present he was; so he consented and stayed. When the morning was up, they had him to the top of the house, and bid him look south; so he did: and behold, at a great distance, he saw a most pleasant mountainous country, beautiful with woods, vineyards, fruits of all sorts, flowers also, with springs and fountains, very delectable to behold. Then he asked the name of the country. They said it was Immanuel's Land."

To anyone journeying south, out of the Vale of Bedford, that great level expanse stretching on either side of the Ouse, the contrast, firstly of the rise to Houghton, and then of the view southward from it, must be a grateful one; surprising when first seen and always, according to the varying lights and shadows of the seasons, with new beauties. As with pictures by accomplished artists, and music by the masters of that art, there is a new revealing with every renewal of acquaintance. The level lands around Bedford have no inspiration. They are well enough in their way, but they are a drudging, trudging country, without horizons. There is, in those miles no Hill Difficulty, it is true, but neither is there variety. It is a region of monotony, in which, for interest amid the flat fields, you turn for interest from the works of nature to find, if it may be, occupation for the speculative mind in the works of man; in the churches and the habitations of the region.

To the average ploughman and the villager these considerations do not apply. But to Bunyan, blest, or, if you like better, afflicted, with a vivid imagination, the contrast between the surroundings of Bedford and Elstow and the near hills of Houghton and those more distant ones of the Chiltern range, had all the effect of drama. They had early impressed him, and as he passed the years in that " den " in which he dreamed

his exquisitely touching story of the pilgrim, all the beauties of the hills came before him, as in a picture, transcended into a something ethereal: into the yearning glories of "Immanuel's Land."

I will attempt no word-painting where Bunyan himself, with inimitable artistry, in phrases so telling, has done so well. It would be a presumption not to be excused. Rather would I point out, in a sheer matter-of-fact way, that the traveller who in the Chiltern hills seeks the fountains and the vineyards of that beautiful story, or the fruits of many kinds, will suffer some disappointment.

The nearer hills, seen in the southward view from Houghton, are those of Silsoe and Pulloxhill, with their massed woodlands. The distant hills are the Chilterns, six miles away, their slopes, where bare of woods and covered only with close-cropped turf, glowing in summer afternoons in a dreaming sunny distant mellow haze; or, where the woods climb the foothills to their shoulders, and top the skyline, promising to those who scale these heights a grateful shade.

From the House Beautiful, Christian, armoured for the dangers of his journey, descended the hill, accompanied by those damsels, Discretion, Piety, Charity, and Prudence. "You go down," they told him, "into the Valley of Humiliation." He began to go down, very warily, but, for all his care, he caught a slip or two. They mattered little, but when he had bade good-bye to the damsels, he had gone only a little way when he espied a foul fiend coming over the field, terribly intent to meet him.

In the ordinary way, we come down into the pleasant little town of Ampthill. Bunyan does not mean to cast any aspersions upon it.

There is on the north wall of the chancel in

Ampthill church a curious monument of Bunyan's time which is worth mentioning, although it does not concern him. This is the elaborate memorial to Richard Nicolls, who was slain at the naval Battle of Solebay (Southwold Bay), May 28th, 1672. The long Latin inscription to him specifically mentions the cannon-ball, a round shot, which is seen on the pediment of this memorial; the shot that killed him. It is described as "the instrument of his mortality and immortality." Nicolls had as patron the Duke of York, afterwards James the Second. In the Duke's interest he went to the New England Colonies in America, and in 1664 seized from the Dutch the town they had styled "New Amsterdam"; re-naming it, in honour of his patron, "New York"; and as New York it remains to this day. It must have been a certain satisfaction to the Dutch that at last they had killed this filibuster.

At this point in his allegory, Bunyan puts aside for the time any local references; for now we come to that epic fight with Apollyon; and, you know, in Ampthill we are not, nor ever was anyone as it well may be supposed, in the least likely to encounter any temptations of the flesh and the devil which might, even by the most imaginative, be elevated into anything in the like of that to which now we are introduced.

Apollyon is the oldest and the most terrific of fiends in all legendary lore. He is the very prince of the infernal crew, as Bunyan well knew. He is the Asmodeus of classic story. Bunyan clothes him with all the terrible panoply of which his fancy is capable. "He was hideous to behold; he was clothed with scales, like a fish, he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was as the mouth of a lion." In short, Bunyan, before coming to this part of his story, must have been

reading well in the Book of Revelation, in whose pages such terrific imaginings are found.

When Apollyon saw Christian, he regarded him with a disdainful countenance, and asked him whence he came and whither he was bound. When Christian said he was come from the City of Destruction, Apollyon declared he was prince and god of that country and so Christian was one of his subjects; and he would not lose him.

"But," replied Christian, "I have let myself to another, the King of princes; and how with fairness can I go back with thee?"

Apollyon promised, if he would go back, all should go well with him. All of the best that his country could afford, that should he have. And, said he, "Thou knowest for the most part that the subjects of the King of princes come to an ill end, because they are transgressors against me and my ways. How many of them have been put to shameful deaths!"

The argument ended, as of course, in Christian refusing to listen to Apollyon's threats or promises. Apollyon straddled quite across the way. "Prepare thyself to die!" he exclaimed in a grievous rage; "for I swear by my infernal den that thou shalt go no farther: here will I spill thy soul!"

In the conflict that followed, Christian was sorely bestead. He grew faint from wounds; his sword flew out of his hand; he took a dreadful fall. Then said Apollyon, "I am sure of thee now!" But, despairing though he was, Christian stretched out his hand for his sword; and the fight went on, with hideous yelling and roaring on the part of the fiend, and with groans and sighs from Christian.

"I never," quaintly says the Dreamer, "saw him all the while give so much as one pleasant look, till he perceived he had wounded Apollyon with his two-edged sword; and then indeed he did smile and look upward."

When the battle was over, Christian sat him down to refresh and to rest. There came a hand with some of the leaves of the tree of life, and his wounds were healed immediately. We are not told what became of Apollyon; but when Christian was recovered he was careful to go forward with his sword drawn; for he knew not what other enemy might be in that valley. But he was offered not another affront.

But there was yet another valley: the Valley of the Shadow of Death. It lay at the end of the first. Christian must needs go through it, for the way to the Celestial City lay through its midst. This place was more dreadful than that in which he had encountered the fiend. On the way he met two men coming with an evil report of the good land to which Christian was bound.

"Back, back!" they exclaimed, "if either life or peace is prized by you."

"Why, what's the matter?" asked Christian.

"Matter!" said they. "Why, we were going that way as you are going, and went as far as we durst, and indeed we were almost past coming back; for had we gone a little farther, we had not been here to bring the news to thee."

"But what have you met with?" asked Christian.

"Why, we were almost in the Valley of the Shadow of Death; but that by good hap we looked before us, and saw the danger before we came to it."

"But what have you seen?" asked Christian.

"Seen! Why, the Valley itself, which is as dark as pitch. We also saw there the hobgoblins, satyrs, and dragons of the pit; we heard also in that Valley a continual howling and yelling, as of a people under unutterable misery, who there sat bound in affliction and irons; and over that Valley hang the discouraging clouds of confusion.

Death also doth always spread his wings over it. In a word, it is every whit dreadful."

"Then," said Christian, "I perceive not yet by what you have said, but that this is my way to the desired haven."

"Be it thy way, we will not choose it for ours," said the men. So they parted, and Christian went on his way, but still with his sword drawn in his hand.

"I saw then in my dream," continues the story, "that so far as this valley reached, there was on the right hand a very deep ditch. . . . Again, on the left hand there was a very dangerous quag, into which if even a good man falls, he can find no bottom for his foot to stand on. . . . The pathway was here also exceeding narrow. . . . About the midst of this valley I perceived the mouth of hell to be, and it stood also by the wayside. Now, thought Christian, "what shall I do?" And ever and anon the flame and smoke would come out in such abundance, with sparks and hideous noises, that he was forced to put up his sword, and betake himself to another weapon, called All-prayer. Thus he went on a great while, yet still the flames would be reaching towards him. Also he heard doleful voices, and rushings to and fro, so that sometimes he thought he should be torn in pieces, and trodden down like mire in the streets."

Poor Christian was sorely afraid; and the more so because this was night and the way so narrow that one must go in extremity of care. And while he was yet trembling and feeling his way, one of the wicked devils of the place came softly to him and whispered in his ear many grievous blasphemies.

But at last morning was come, and Christian looked back to see what manner of hazards he had undergone. Surely enough he saw the ditch

that was on the one hand, and the quag that was on the other; also how narrow the way was that lay betwixt them both; and he saw, too, the hobgoblins and satyrs and dragons of the pit, but afar off; for they would not come near after break of day. It was a mercy that the sun was rising, for although the first part of the Valley of the Shadow of Death was dangerous, yet this second part was, if possible, far more dangerous, by reason of the way all along being so full of snares, traps, gins, and nets here; and so full of pits, pitfalls, deep holes, and shelvings down there.

At the end of this valley lay blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of men; even of pilgrims that had gone this way formerly; for here was the cave of the giants, Pope and Pagan, by whose power and tyranny the men whose blood, bones, ashes, etc., lay there, were cruelly put to death.

But "by this place," says Bunyan, "Christian went without much danger, whereat I somewhat wondered, but I have learnt since that Pagan has been dead, many a day; and as for the other, though he be yet alive, he is by reason of age, and also of the many shrewd brushes that he met with in his younger days, grown so crazy and stiff in his joints that he can now do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they go by, and biting his nails because he cannot come at them."

"So I saw that Christian went on his way; yet, at the sight of the Old Man that sat in the mouth of the cave, he could not tell what to think, especially because he spake to him, though he could not go after him, saying, 'You will never mend till more of you be burned.' But he held his peace and set a good face on it, and so went by, and catched no hurt."

The way along which Christian went, in the

imagination of Bunyan, was westwards from Ampthill, to Millbrook. It is a pleasant way, and not along the two miles until you come to Millbrook church is it in any sense a foreshadowing of the extraordinary place, the dread valley that the pilgrims found. Nor does the road go along any well-defined valley. Ampthill is a little town of less than three thousand inhabitants; not sufficiently large to have developed any suburbs, and thus there are not any ragged, unfinished outskirts. The town has all the appearance of having, so to say, been completed in the eighteenth century; without any intention of adding to itself. On its outskirts are passed some pretty old cottages, on the right, bearing each an early nineteenth-century iron plate with a large capital letter O, surmounted by a coronet; indicating the ownership of Ampthill Park at that period by the Earl of Ossory.

Millbrook church stands up boldly, on the apex of its hill, on the right. Just beyond it a road bears round to the right, leaving the forward highway, which proceeds to Ridgmont, three miles away. The road round to the right goes to Bedford. It is a singular feature along this route, just where it descends, on turning to the right for Millbrook village, that suggested to Bunyan his dark and gloomy gorge in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. But let it at once be said that the situation of Millbrook, and the village itself, form as pretty a picture as anywhere may be found in Bedfordshire. Normally there is nothing in the least gloomy about either; but here is that which in Bedfordshire is sufficiently surprising. In that shire, which is mostly, apart from the Chiltern Hills, one of a monotonous level landscape, we have, by exception, a veritable ravine. The road becomes here indeed, as Bunyan describes it, exceedingly narrow, with a deep cleft on

either side. The Bedfordshire County Council long exhibited a notice at this point, warning drivers of vehicles that "This Road is Dangerous," and advising caution. Rails fence in the verge of the road against any chance of traffic running off it into the depths. Down there, amidst mossy hollows, rise seven springs, from which flows a stream rapidly down the hillside into the vale, where presently it loses its original briskness and becomes a trickling tributary of the Ouse. Many trees grow in this gorge of Millbrook, which is best seen from the lawn at the back of the rectory-house; whence paths lead steeply down into it. There were, a few years before the writing of these pages, still a few old persons at Millbrook who could remember, or could remember their parents speaking of, a group of cottages down in this hollow, and a blacksmith's forge there.

Winter makes a great change in all landscape, and perhaps as much change at Millbrook as anywhere. If, coming to the ridge here at the close of an autumn or winter afternoon, we look northward towards Bedford, across the vale, that region, heavy with the mists and damps of the Ouse, wears a very gloomy appearance. If Bunyan knew Millbrook well, as he scarce could have failed to do, he would have known it all round the calendar. He chose this spot then, with its evening, autumnal glooms, as overlooking that dread valley of Christian's pilgrimage; and the blacksmith's forge and ringing anvil down in the ravine were models for that place whence came flames and smoke, sparks, and hideous noises. It cannot be allowed by anyone that the sound of a blacksmith's anvil is a hideous noise; and it is well known that Händel was inspired by the work at such an anvil to write a famous musical composition. But an allegorist is not to be put into strict trammels of sheer, unimaginative matter of fact,

MILLBROOK.

and so " hideous noises " the sounds of the anvil became.

The ancient church of Millbrook exhibits a very decorative external kind of wall building, successive courses of stone, three of four courses at a time, alternating in colour ; brownish-red sandstone and grey-white limestone. It is a local manner in church architecture, occasionally, but not inevitably, found. In the church is a monument to Lord Holland, who died in 1840, and Lady Holland, 1845, the divorced wife, 1797, of Sir Godfrey Webster, of Battle Abbey ; and on the west wall of the north aisle hangs a curious painted wooden tablet, recording the demise of a Bedfordshire personage, one Thomas Allen, who died in 1805, and who had filled the office of steward to the Earl of Ossory, who was *Custos Rotulorum* for the shire ; or, as the illiterate painter has weirdly rendered it, " Crocus Rotulorum."

Millbrook is, indeed, a place of considerable charm, if of quite inconsiderable size. The meadow on the height beside the church is thought to have been the site of a manor-house of the Albinis, but the buildings disappeared so long ago that no actual record of it survives. The population of Millbrook was in 1820 about six hundred. It is now one hundred and fifty ; a decline typical of agricultural districts in general. The land belongs to the Duke of Bedford. It scarcely can be a desirable property; for rents of the cottages range from about ninepence a week ; and one was indeed taken down in 1926 because the cost of repairing it, amounting to about five pounds, would not have been warranted by the amount to be received.

CHAPTER VII

"Vanity Fair": Stourbridge Fair, Cambridge—The "Little Hill of Lucre": Pulloxhill—"Doubting Castle": Cainhoe Castle—The "By-way to Hell": quarry-workings at Totternhoe

AS Christian went upon his way, he came to a little ascent which was cast up on purpose that pilgrims might see before them. Here it was that he met Faithful, who had started before him from the City of Destruction; and they journeyed on together, Faithful telling of his adventures. Thus they lightened the tedium of their way, which led through a wilderness. Faithful as surely we may see, from his very name, had fewer troubles, thus far, than Christian had experienced. Christian was Bunyan himself, with all his heart-whole desire for righteousness, but also with all his fears and doubts, which were the lions and the pitfalls and the darkness of the way. Faithful, for instance, had seen the lions in the way to the House Beautiful, but they were asleep. Nor had he fallen into the Slough of Despond. He met Wanton on the way, but he resisted her, and so came to the Hill Difficulty. There it seems, he was like to have been put off his pilgrimage altogether; for in that place he met with an aged man who said "Thou lookest like an honest fellow. Wilt thou be content to dwell with me for the wages that I will give thee?" Then Faithful asked him his name, and where he dwelt. He said his name was Adam the First, and that he dwelt in the town of Deceit. Asked what was his work and the wages he would give, he said his work was many delights and the wages

were that his servant should be heir at the last. He said he had three daughters ; the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, and that his servant could marry them, if he would. Faithful at first was somewhat intrigued with these conditions of service ; but he read on the man's forehead : " Put off the old man with his deeds," and so refused. The old man reviled him, and sent after him one who knocked him down. But through the Valley of the Shadow, where Christian had that horror of a great darkness, and the dread of satyrs and hobgoblins, Faithful had sunshine all the way.

So, as Christian and Faithful went on, discoursing, through the wilderness, they saw off a little way to one side a man whose name was Talkative. He was a tall man, and somewhat more comely at a distance than close at hand. He said he also was going to the heavenly country. Mr. Talkative is so well drawn in these pages ; a figure so fully fashioned, that Bunyan must have had someone in mind when—well, not " creating " the character, but in artistically enlarging upon it. He was " ready to talk of things heavenly or things earthly ; things moral or things evangelical, things sacred or things profane, things past or things to come ; things foreign or things at home, things essential or things circumstantial." Faithful was pleased by this man's profusion of talk : but Christian was not. He told Faithful he knew already of him : " He is the son of one Saywell. He dwelt in Prating Row. He is for any company, and for any talk. As he talks now with you, so will he talk when on the ale-bench. The more drink he hath in his crown, the more of these things he hath in his mouth. Religion hath no place in his heart or his home, or conversation ; all that he hath lieth in his tongue, and his religion is to make a noise therewith. . . .

Thus say the common people that know him. "A saint abroad, and a devil at home." His poor family finds it so; he is such a churl, such a railer at, and so unreasonable with his servants, that they know neither how to do for, or to speak to, him. Men that have any dealing with him say it is better to deal with a Turk than with him; for fairer dealing they shall have at his hands. This Talkative will go beyond him, defraud, beguile, and overreach them."

So they give Mr. Talkative the go-by. Presently they met with Evangelist, who discoursed with them, and told them of the town of Vanity, to which presently they must come, for the way to the Celestial City lay through it. And there, said he, one of them must die, for it was a town of cruel enemies to pilgrims.

And soon, indeed, they came to that town of Vanity, in which was kept a fair called Vanity Fair; a fair which lasted all the year round; in which all conceivable sorts of goods were sold; but chiefly houses, lands, trades, honours, places, preferments, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures, and delights of all sorts. At this fair were to be seen juggling, knaves, cheats, plays, games, fools, apes, and rogues; and that of every kind.

Here were to be seen also, and that for nothing, thefts, murders, adulteries, and false swearers. And, as in other fairs of less moment, here were several rows and streets, under their proper names, where such and such wares were vended. Here were the Britain Row, the French Row, the Italian Row, the Spanish Row, the German Row, all where the respective vanities of those countries were to be sold.

We cannot fail to note, in much of the foregoing, the inspissated bitterness of this good man's writing. It gives us to wonder whether, after all,

that merry England of old, of which we hear so much ; that England of the simpler life and homely pleasures was, after all, innately better than our more complex age, with which often it is compared, greatly, as a rule, to our own disadvantage. As a sheer matter of fact, we shall know, if we are well read into the doings of olden times, that those, in the way of conduct, and in many other ways, were the worse times. Always we shall have the rogues, the murderers, the cheats and other evil-doers ; but allowing for the increase of population, they were more plentiful then than they now are.

We can easily comprehend much of Bunyan's bitterness, when he mentions that cave in which sat the old and outworn giant, Pope, and note his satisfaction at the giant's impotent ill-will ; and the acid humour, in his description of Vanity Fair in which, in describing the several Rows, he says that although " the ware of Rome and her merchandise are greatly promoted, our English nation, with some others, have taken a dislike thereat."

In the town of Vanity and its fair we are out of our way. Bunyan had no purpose to make an allegorical pilgrimage of Bedfordshire, but used his experiences and observations as best they suited his story. Where, then, were the town of Vanity and the fair. He had a model for what goes forward at a fair in his own native village of Elstow ; but most places had their fairs. There was a larger fair at Bedford. But where was the largest fair then in England ? It was at Cambridge. Everyone went to the annual fair at Stourbridge, on the outskirts of Cambridge. All England went to it, and foreign merchants had their booths in the respective Rows, even as indicated by Bunyan. It is not to be thought that Bunyan, exceptionally when all others repaired to the fair at Stourbridge, should never have seen it. This fair, still officially

lasting three weeks, is however, merely the shadow of its former self. In the time of Bunyan it opened on September 7th and closed on the 29th, and was thronged in all that time. Here were the Duddery, the Row in which the mercers and clothiers displayed their wares; and Ironmongers Row, Cooks Row, Garlick Row; Booksellers Row; with many another busy street, each one allotted to its appropriate trade. It is not to be supposed that, in all the concourse of people who resorted to Stourbridge Fair there was not a considerable proportion of undesirables. To deal with these there were provided, as at other large fairs, the stocks, the whipping-post, the cage, the special constables and the magistrates sitting daily in the Court of Pie Powder; a tribunal of summary justice dealing with offences committed within the area of the fair.

When Christian and Faithful entered the fair, they were clothed differently from the manner of any who traded in that place; and the strangeness of their attire caused a great hubbub. No attire, however strange, would have attracted much notice in the real fair, of Stourbridge. Folk were too well used to seeing strangely clad foreigners, to cast more than a passing glance upon unfamiliar cut or colour. But Bunyan has his story for the telling, and his moral to be drawn.

Some in the fair, looking in wonder upon Christian and Faithful, said they were fools, or bedlams; others thought they were outlandish men, because of their speech; for few could understand them; those who kept the fair being men of this world, while the pilgrims spoke the language of Canaan.

But for all this difficulty, they did make themselves comprehended, to an evil purpose; for when the merchandisers asked "What will you buy?" they answered: "We buy the truth."

So, hearing of this unaccountable kind of purchasing, the people of the fair were convinced these men surely were mad. Even in these times of our own, it must be a sorry affliction, to be mad; but in those the bedlamite was a sport for the idle and mischievous, and even to men of good report, persons to be treated with severity. So it was that Christian and Faithful were had before the magistrates, sitting to adjudicate upon misdemeanours committed here. Thence they were taken and besmeared with dirt and put in the cage, where for some time they lay, to be the sport of any man's malice or revenge. But the men behaved themselves in the cage so meekly that some of the better sort were sorry for them and said they were no disturbers of the peace, and that there were others in the fair who more justly should have been put in the cage. This led to blows; and then the men were had out of the cage and brought again before the examiners and charged further with being the cause of these new disturbances to the peace and trade of the fair. So they were beaten pitifully and led in chains up and down the Rows, for an example and terror to others. Then they were again remanded to the cage, whence they were brought once more into the Court. Here sat the judge, Lord Hate-good; and three witnesses named Envy, Superstition, and Pickthank. They were invited to say what they knew about Faithful. They knew nothing good; but much of evil. Prisoner at the bar was a pestilent fellow, who had spoken ill of Beelzebub, the prince of that country, and of the prince's honourable friends, the Lord Old Man, the Lord Carnal Delight, the Lord Luxurious, the Lord Desire of Vain Glory, my old Lord Lechery, and Sir Having Greedy, with the rest of our nobility. Faithful, asked by the judge to say if he had anything in excuse, spoke out, and the judge, telling him he ought to be slain upon the

place, then addressed the jury, reciting to them the acts which contemplated offences such as those of which the prisoner had been guilty, or was alleged to be guilty. The jury numbered Mr. Blindman, Mr. No Good, Mr. Malice, Mr. Love Lust, Mr. Live Loose, Mr. Heady, Mr. High Mind, Mr. Liar, Mr. Enmity, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Hate Light, and Mr. Implacable.

Faithful was found guilty and sentenced to be had from the place where he was to the place from whence he came, and there to be put to the most cruel death that could be invented.

"They, therefore, brought him out, to do with him according to their law; and, first they scourged him, then they buffeted him, then they lanced his flesh with knives; after that, they stoned him with stones, then pricked him with their swords; and, last of all, they burned him to ashes at the stake. Thus came Faithful to his end."

Christian by some strange chance escaped the martyrdom of Faithful, and went forth from the fair, accompanied by one Hopeful. As they went, they were overtaken by one By-ends, who said he came from the town of Fairspeech, and was bound for the Celestial City. By-ends, who was disinclined to give his name, said most in the town of Fairspeech were his kindred: my Lord Time-server, My Lord Fairspeech, Mr. Smoothman, Mr. Facing-both-Ways, Mr. Anything; and the parson of the parish, Mr. Two-tongues. "Mr. Two-tongues was my mother's own brother, by father's side, and, to tell you the truth, I am become a gentleman of good quality, yet my great-grandfather was but a waterman, looking one way and rowing another; and I got most of my estate by the same occupation."

Here we see Bunyan as a humorist with point and resource. His shafts strike home. So he goes on, in the like manner:

THE JURY IN "THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS."
By Frederick Barnard.

" My wife," said By-ends, " is a very virtuous woman, the daughter of a virtuous woman ; she was my Lady Feigning's daughter, therefore she came of a very honourable family, and is arrived to such a pitch of breeding that she knows how to carry it to all, even to prince and peasant. It is true we somewhat differ in religion from those of the stricter sort ; yet but in two small points ; first, we never strive against wind and tide ; secondly, we are always most zealous when Religion goes in his silver slippers ; we love much to walk with him in the street, if the sun shines, and the people applaud him."

Then Christian stepped aside, and said to Hopeful : " It runs in my mind that this is one By-ends, of Fairspeech ; and if it be he, we have as very a knave in our company as dwelleth in all these parts."

Christian was a forthright person. He asks By-ends if that were his name, and the man said it was not his, but that people had put it upon him, as a nickname. To which Christian, who did not mind giving offence, if so be he could come at the truth, replied that suited him very well. By-ends still wished to keep company with them ; but Christian discouraged him, and went on in advance. They saw three men following, who greeted By-ends. They were Mr. Hold-the-World, Mr. Money-love, and Mr. Save All. They had all been schoolfellows, and were taught by one Mr. Gripe-man, a schoolmaster of Love-again, a market-town in the county of Coveting, in the north. This schoolmaster taught them the art of getting, either by violence, cozenage, flattery, lying ; or by putting on a guise of religion ; and these four gentlemen had attained much of the art of their master ; so that they could each of them have kept such a school themselves.

By-ends and his friends then held a discussion

on points of conduct, and wished to refer it to Christian and Hopeful; and so came up with them again. But they soon again parted, and Christian and Hopeful came to a delicate plain called Ease. With this plain they were well content, but they crossed it all too soon, and came to "a little hill called Lucre, and in that hill a silver mine, which some of them that had formerly gone that way, because of the rarity of it, promptly had turned aside out of their proper straight path to see; but going too near the brink of the pit, the ground being deceitful under them, broke, and they were slain; some also had been maimed there, and could not to their dying day be their own men again."

"Then I saw in my dream that a little off the road, over against the silver mine, stood Demas (gentleman-like) to call to passengers to come and see; who said to Christian and his fellow, 'Ho! turn aside hither, and I will show you a thing.'

"'What thing,' asked Christian, 'so deserving as to turn us out of our way, to see it?'

"'Here,' replied Demas, 'is a silver mine, and some digging in it for treasure. If you will come, you may, with a little pains, richly provide for yourselves.'

"'Let us go see," said Hopeful.

"'Not I!' answered Christian. 'I have heard of this place before now; and how many have there been slain; and besides that, treasure is a snare to those that seek it; for it hindereth them in their pilgrimage.'

"Then Christian called to Demas, saying, 'Is not the place dangerous? Hath it not hindered many in their pilgrimage?'

"'Not very dangerous,' answered Demas, 'except to those that are careless.' But he blushed as he spoke."

So at once Christian and Hopeful went their

way, and would not be turned aside ; but when By-ends came up and his companions, they answered to the first call of Demas and went to the silver mine ; " but whether they fell into the pit by looking over the brink thereof, or whether they went down to dig, or whether they were smothered in the bottom by the damps that commonly arise," says the Dreamer, " I am not certain ; but this I

GOLD CLOSE, PULLOXHILL : THE " SILVER MINE " ON THE HILL OF LUCRE.

observed, that they never were seen again in the way."

The place here spoken of is a real place. To come to it, we must journey three miles south-east of Ampthill, to Pulloxhill. That village stands upon a hilltop, an outlier of the Chilterns at Barton-le-Clay, a mile or so yet farther south. To expect a silver mine in Bedfordshire would be indeed fantastic ; yet in the sixteenth century the folk of Pulloxhill, and many others, thought they had on this hilltop a gold mine, and sunk pits there for that treasure. Former editions of the Ordnance Survey maps mark " Gold Mine " here ;

and those who take an interest in map-reading will have been surprised to see such a thing, and have wondered what it could mean. Lysons, in his *Magna Britannia* writes : " It has been said indeed that gold-ore was formerly discovered at Pullox-hill, and that an attempt was made to work a mine there." What the simple souls of Bedfordshire thought was gold, proved to be only shining yellow talc, mixed with a yellow, earthy matter. Known and worked in Bunyan's time, the story of it evidently was so familiar to him that to fit in with it, he invented the " little hill of Lucre " by which it is approached. The spot is readily to be found, even to this day, and is a meadow called locally " Gold Close." The reasons, if any, why Bunyan should have styled this a " silver " mine are not to be guessed at. The story of the supposed gold-mine has not survived. We do not know who, or how many, they were who worked it, or for how long, or how much they lost in the enterprise. But here, in the meadow are still the grass-grown tumbled heaps and hollows of the pits they dug ; one of them forming a considerable pond.

For several days and nights, Christian and Hopeful wandered happily by a river side and in flower-decked meadows. Bunyan had in mind the valley of the little river Flit, which gives a name to Flitton and to Flitwick, and between Ampthill, Water End, Maulden and Clophill affords some pleasant footpath walking. But it will not take days to walk it. Here, by the stream at Clophill, is the original of " Bye-path Meadow," where Vain Confidence, a guide who himself knew not the way, led Christian and Hopeful, out of their path, and himself fell into a pit. Lost, and overtaken by night, the pilgrims lie down to sleep, and in the morning find themselves in the grounds of Doubting Castle, the dismal stronghold of Giant Despair.

Getting up early in the morning and walking about his grounds, the giant found the pilgrims sleeping, and seized them and forced them to go with him, for he was stronger than they. Coming to his castle the giant thrust them into "a very dark dungeon, nasty and stinking to the spirits of these two men. Here, then, they lay, from Wednesday morning till Saturday night, without one bit of bread, or drop of drink, or light, or any to ask how they did ; they were, therefore, here in evil case."

Giant Despair had a wife whose name was Diffidence. He told her how he had taken a couple of prisoners and thrown them into his dungeon for trespassing on his grounds. What best had he further to do to them? he asked her. This lady counselled him in the morning to beat them without mercy. So Giant Despair, when he arose, cut a huge crab-tree cudgel, and went down into the dungeon and gave them what-for with such a will that they could not move. Then he left them to condole with each other. Next night, the giant's wife, talking over the matter with her husband, counselled him to go to his prisoners and suggest to them they should make away with themselves. So he went and said that as they were never likely to come out of that place, the only way would be to make an end of themselves forthwith, either by knife, halter, or poison ; "For why," said he, "should you choose life, seeing that it is attended with so much bitterness?"

But they only besought him to let them go. At which, in a fury, he rushed at them, and would have ended them, there and then, but that he fell into a fit (for sometimes, in sunshiny weather, he fell into fits), and withdrew.

Towards evening, the giant again descended to the dungeon, to see if his prisoners had acted upon his advice. He found them only just alive, but not ready to put an end to their miseries. So

again he went away. That night his wife once more asked him what they had done, and advised him the next morning to take them to the Castle yard, and show them the bones and skulls of those he already had slain. So he did. "These," he said, "were pilgrims, as you are, once, and they trespassed in my grounds, as you have done; and when I thought fit, I tore them in pieces, and so within ten days, I will do to you." With that, he bade them begone again to their dungeon, and beat them all the way to it. That night again the giant and his wife talked of the men. Mrs. Diffidence feared they were in hope someone would come to their rescue, or that they had picklocks, by which they hoped to escape.

"Say you so?" answered the giant; "I will search them in the morning."

Meanwhile, that night they began to pray, and so continued almost to daybreak. Then Christian broke out, like one amazed: "What a fool am I, thus to lie in a stinking dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty. I have a key in my bosom, called Promise; that I am persuaded, will open any lock in Doubting Castle."

Then said Hopeful, "That is good news, good brother; pluck it out of thy bosom, and try."

Christian drew forth his key, and with it tried the dungeon door. The bolt flew back and the door opened with ease, and they came out. Then Christian went to the outer door, leading into the castle yard, and opened that also.

"After that," says the Dreamer, "he went to the iron gate, for that must be opened, too; but that lock went damnably hard, yet the key did open it. Then they thrust open the gate, to make their escape with speed, but that gate, as it opened, made such a creaking, that it waked Giant Despair, who, hastily rising to pursue his prisoners, felt his limbs to fail, for his fits took him again, so

CAINHOE CASTLE: "DOUBTING CASTLE."

that he could by no means go after them. Then they went on, and came to the King's highway, where they were safe."

It is on passing the cross-roads at Clophill and turning south that we come to the place indicated by "Doubting Castle." Climbing up to Wrest Park ("Wrest in Beds" offers some employment for the humorist intent rather upon phonetics than spelling), we come to the great tree-shaded mound of what once was Cainhoe Castle, whose masonry disappeared so long ago as to be beyond the memory of man. But the castle mound is vastly impressive. It almost certainly is of prehistoric antiquity; and seems to have been heightened, and its ditches deepened in Norman times, when it belonged to the families of de Albini and St. Amand. It was a castle of a purely defensible nature rather than of a partly residential kind, and had a great circular shell keep, never intended to be roofed. In this respect, it resembled the castles of Totnes in Devon, and Trematon in Cornwall. An entirely chance grouping of this great mound of Cainhoe with one of the old disused piers of an entrance gateway to Wrest Park gives any view of it a grim suggestion of Giant Despair's stronghold; its sculptured griffin seeming to bid defiance to all who would essay to scale that mound.

Freed from their dungeon cell, the pilgrims went their way and came at length to the Delectable Mountains, whose distant forms Christian had been shown from the roof-top of the House Beautiful. And when they were come to these mountains, and had refreshed and washed, they saw on their tops shepherds feeding their flocks. They asked the shepherds "Whose Delectable Mountains are these? And whose be the sheep that feed upon them?"

The shepherds said these mountains were in Immanuel's Land, and the sheep also were his.

The shepherds lovingly entertained the pilgrims, and showed them various wonders. "They had them first to the top of a hill called Error, which was very steep on the farthest side, and bid them look down to the bottom. So Christian and Hopeful looked down, and saw at the bottom several men dashed all to pieces by a fall that they had from the top. . . . Then I saw that they had them to the top of another mountain, and the name of that is Caution, and bid them look afar off; which when they did, they perceived, as they thought, several men walking up and down among the tombs that were there; and they perceived that the men were blind; because they stumbled sometimes upon the tombs, and because they could not get out from among them." These unfortunate men were of those who had got out of their way, and had fallen into the hands of Giant Despair, of Doubting Castle, who had put out their eyes and led them among these tombs, where he left them to wander.

"Then," says the Dreamer, "the shepherds had them to another place in a bottom, where was a door in the side of a hill; and they opened the door and bid them look in. They looked in, therefore, and saw that within it was very dark and smoky; they also thought they heard a rumbling noise, as of fire, and a cry as of some tormented; and that they smelt the scent of brimstone.

Then said Christian: "What means this?" The shepherds told them "This is a by-way to hell, a way that hypocrites go in at; namely such as sell their birthright; to wit, Esau; such as sell their Master as Judas; such as blaspheme the Gospel, with Alexander; and that lie and dissemble, with Ananias and Sapphira, his wife."

CHAPTER VIII

The " Delectable Mountains " : the Chiltern Hills—Conclusion of the Pilgrimage—Bunyan's literary style—His metrical explanation of how the work came to be written—Imitations and parodies of *The Pilgrim's Progress*—The rare first edition

WHEN the pilgrims wished to go forward they and the shepherds walked together to the end of the mountains. Then said the shepherds one to another, " Let us here show the pilgrims the gates of the Celestial City, if they have skill to look through our perspective glass."

The pilgrims then lovingly accepted the motion, so they had them to the top of a high hill called Clear, and gave them the glass to look.

Then they tried to look, but the remembrance of that last thing that the shepherds had shown them made their hands shake ; by reason of which impediment they could not look steadily through the glass ; yet they thought they saw something like the gate, and also some of the glory of the place. When they were about to depart, one of the shepherds gave them a note of the way ; another of them bid them beware of the flatterer ; the third bid them take heed that they slept not upon the enchanted ground ; and the fourth bid them God-speed."

The Delectable Mountains are the Chiltern Hills, which as we come due south from Bedford and Elstow, past Ampthill, to Barton-le-Clay, are so bold and picturesque as to be perhaps at their best. But it would be a hard saying certainly to declare at what exact point these remarkable hills of Chiltern come to their greatest beauty or more

striking shape ; for they have, in all their range, a singularly diversified appearance ; here peaked and eccentric, and bare ; or there with the rounded contours and swellings and depressions of true chalk downs, with smooth turf, and again with their forms hidden by dense woods. The Chiltern Hills in Bedfordshire rise to their greatest heights at Kensworth, south of Dunstable, where an elevation of 810 feet is reached ; but their loftiest point is in Buckinghamshire, near Wendover, 950 feet. The heights of Totternhoe, although not gaining that atitude, are far more imposing, not only by reason of their natural abruptness, but also because of the centuries-old quarrying that has been carried on there. This has resulted in great pits and cliff-like scarps, with many old horizontal galleries ; most of them now walled up and disused. The chalk here in its lower strata forms a good building stone for use internally. It is not of much value for external work, for it is apt to scale by exposure to the weather. This "clunch," as it is called, being soft when newly quarried, is obviously of especial value in decorative and highly enriched detailed sculpture ; and hardens with time. But it must not be exposed to the elements. A great deal of this material was used for the interiors of churches, locally ; and much of St. Alban's Abbey was built of it.

There is little use of clunch in our times ; for convenience and cheapness of transport have brought other building stone readily to hand ; and so it is that chalk-burning for lime is to-day the principal use of the quarrying. It was, however, always carried on, for lime has ever been a necessity.

Here, in the neighbourhood of that important prehistoric track, the Icknield Way, there are numerous other pits, once pit-dwellings, and earthwork circles and the tumuli, the graves of

forgotten men. This, then, is the place meant by Bunyan, when he makes the shepherds have the pilgrims to that " place in a bottom, where there was a door in the side of the hill," which the shepherds said was " the mouth of hell." The place was one of those old workings, and the rumblings were the sounds of the quarrymen, at their work. The place where the pilgrims saw the bodies of men who were seen to be dashed in pieces could have been any one of the great chalk pits cut in the hill-sides, and the limeburners' activities well might be likened by Bunyan to the infernal fumes that frightened Christian and Hopeful. The " tombs," amidst which the men deprived by Giant Despair of their eyesight stumbled, obviously were the tumuli on the downs of Dunstable.

With the passage down hill of the pilgrims towards the Land of Beulah and the ultimate stages on to the Celestial City, the detailed itinerary becomes less definite. The Dreamer here says : " So I awoke from my dream," and though presently he says, " And I slept and dreamed again," his resumed vision, although not less beautiful and touching than before (it is, indeed, more poignant) has less clarity in the matter of topographical interest than we who seek to follow the footsteps of these men could wish.

It has been suggested, and with much shrewdness of insight, that when Bunyan tells us he awoke from his dream, he is speaking in a parable in the Town Gaol of Bedford, on Bedford Bridge, where he had written *The Pilgrim's Progress* thus far. Yet he does not pursue his parable ; of his liberation from his second incarceration, for though, as we have seen, he says he slept and dreamed again, he suffered no other imprisonment. The enforced leisure of those six months gave his imagination the widest scope, and feelings of the

greatest intensity. He saw, as a prisoner, the well-remembered scenes of his native Bedfordshire with a reminiscent sympathy and a longing which, as we may think, were missing when he had regained his liberty and could come to these Chiltern Hills whenever he had a mind to do so.

Moreover, again his own man, and free, so far as authority was concerned, to go whither he would; yet in another way Bunyan was not so much at his own disposal. He was now free to preach when and where he should choose. His popularity was great. He had suffered for his religious principles and for those of his fellows; and all were eager to hear him. He had little time for dreaming so delightfully as we have found him doing; and so *The Pilgrim's Progress* hastens to its conclusion. The great masterpiece might have been yet greater, as we think certainly it would have been longer and more closely knit towards its close than it is.

So now we have Christian and Hopeful descending from the Delectable Mountains, with that "note of the way" which the shepherds had given them. We cannot place that "little crooked lane" to which soon they came, whence jauntily stepped the brisk lad, Ignorance. If we seek crooked lanes there is an embarrassment of plenty. And we shall not find at all any "very dark" lane. Bunyan invented it; just as surely as he invented the seven devils they met there, carrying a man helplessly bound with seven cords.

These perils of the way to the Celestial City move Christian to tell Hopeful the sad story of one Little Faith, who came near being murdered by those rascals, Faintheart, Mistrust, and Guilt. They set up him in "Deadman's Lane," a place of evil report, "which comes down from Broadway Gate." This lane, he says, is "so called because of the murders that are commonly done there."

There is a Deadman's Hill at the corner of Maulden Wood, on the road south from Bedford to Clophill, and similar names are to be found on the map. How they originated has long been forgotten but in that "merry England" of old there was only too often excellent reason for them. As already has been noted, at Totternhoe, in the thirteenth century, a Ralph Bunyan slew a priest, whose body was found on the hillside; and many another assassin was at work, either in quarrel, for revenge, or for robbery. Travellers went with fear. There were, too, "Cut-throat lanes," and such like places; but not always was Cut-Throat Lane a place where a murder had been committed. The name meant sometimes a short cut: *i.e.* "cut-athwart" lane.

But Little Faith, who was he? Bunyan, with his unfailing resource for picturesque narrative, does not forget to tell us all about him. He was a good man, and he dwelt in the town of Sincere. He, too, was going on pilgrimage, and chanced to sit down in that place, and sleep. Unhappily, at that time there chanced to come down from Broadway Gate those three sturdy rogues, Faint Heart, Mistrust, and Guilt, three brothers. Espying Little Faith sleeping there, they came galloping up with speed. Little Faith, just awakened, was getting up to go on his journey when they came at him, "and with threatening language bid him stand." At this Little Faith looked as white as a sheet, and had neither power to fight nor fly. Then said Faint Heart, "Deliver thy purse!" but he made no haste to do it, for he was loth to lose his money. Mistrust ran up to him, and, thrusting his hand into his pocket, pulled out thence a bag of silver. Then he cried out "Thieves, thieves!" With that, Guilt, with a great club that was in his hand, struck Little Faith on the head, and with that blow felled him flat

to the ground, where he lay bleeding, as one that would bleed to death. All this while the thieves stood by, but at last, hearing that some were upon the road, and fearing lest it should be one Great-grace, that dwells in the town of Good Confidence, they betook them to their heels, and left this good man to shift for himself. Now after a while he came to himself, and getting up, made shift to scramble on his way."

This moral tale evidently is derived from the kind of thing that in Bunyan's time not uncommonly happened to wayfarers; the kind of thing that in some extremities left those travellers dead, and eventually brought the bandits to the gallows and to the wayside gibbet; that familiar object along the roads in those and later years.

The pilgrims went on, and that dapper and brisk young fellow, Ignorance, followed. They went on "until they saw a way put itself in their way, and seemed withal to lie as straight as the way they should go. And here they knew not which of the two to take, for both seemed straight before them; therefore here they stood still, to consider."

We all know this dilemma along the roads. Where the way is plain, in that place a wholly unnecessary signpost is provided. Where the way is difficult, no sign-post is to be found. That is the little prank the County Surveyor loves to play, practical humorist that he is. And never, by any chance, in such difficult places is there anyone to be seen, near or far. The land seems to have become uninhabited. But Bunyan does not expend himself upon these wayfarers' woes. He tells us only of a strange man they met at this juncture.

"As they were thinking about the way, behold, a man black of flesh, but covered with a very light robe, came to them and asked them why they stood there. They answered, they were going to

the Celestial City, but knew not which of these ways to take."

This truly black man, whose flesh, and not merely his skin, was black (this is a little and very rare lapse on the part of Bunyan, whose literary style and descriptive way are usually unexceptionable), then told them he also was bound for the Celestial City, and would show them the way. Unwary, they went with him and he led them into a road which turned back on itself, and they became entangled in a net. The white robe then fell off the black man's back ; and then Christian perceived that this man was one against whom they had been warned by the shepherds. He was the Flatterer : " A man that flattereth his neighbours spreadeth a net for their feet."

Hopeful here remarked, reminding Christian, that the shepherds had given them a note of the way, but that they had forgotten to read in it. But as they lay in the net, bewailing their sorry plight, there came to them a Shining One, who held a whip of small cords. He asked them what they did there, and when they told him, he asked, had not the shepherds given them a note of directions ? And had they not been warned also of the Flatterer ? They could not but acknowledge that they had. Whereupon the Shining One beat them, as they lay, sorely with his whip.

Then he bade them go their way, and pay heed to the other directions of the shepherds.

So, thanking the Shining One for his kindness, they went forward, singing. As they went, they met a man coming towards them, with his back to Zion. His name was Atheist ; he asked them whither they were going. Christian said they were going to Mount Zion ; whereupon Atheist fell into a very great laughter. " I laugh," he said, " to see what ignorant persons you are, to take upon you so tedious a journey, and yet are like

to have nothing but your travel for your pains."

Said Christian: "Why, man, do you think we shall not be received?"

"Received! there is not such a place as you dream of, in all the world," answered Atheist.

To this Christian aptly replied that there was such in the world to come; they both had heard and believed that there was such a place to be found.

But Atheist went his backward way, strongly set in his own disbelief, and they saw him never again.

Then came the pilgrims to a region whose name may mean delights or evil happenings. They came to "a certain country whose air naturally tended to make one drowsy, if he came a stranger into it. And here Hopeful began to be very dull and heavy to sleep; wherefore, he said unto Christian, 'I do now begin to grow so drowsy that I can scarcely hold open mine eyes; let us lie down here, and take one nap.'"

"By no means," returned Christian, "lest, sleeping, we never awake more."

Then said Hopeful, "Why, my brother, sleep is sweet to the labouring man; we may be refreshed if we take a nap." "Do not you remember," replied Christian, "that one of the shepherds bid us beware of the Enchanted Ground? He meant by that, that we should beware of sleeping."

There are all kinds of enchantments: evil magic as well as good. It would, however, puzzle the wit of any man to discover for us where was this Enchanted Ground of the slumbrous air, spoken of in *The Pilgrim's Progress*; unless we are to assume that the deep folds and valleys in the Chiltern Hills around Barton-le-Clay, with their still and drowsy air on the long summer afternoons may have suggested the magical country. It would be, perhaps, pursuing Bunyan's

appreciations of scenery too far to suggest that he could find any scenery of an enchanting beauty; yet already it has been seen that he had an appreciation of natural features far more acutē than the writers of his age. Herrick, who was contemporary with Bunyan, could sing in two strains: of the dullness of Devonshire, and of love amidst the daffodils and the daisy-dappled meads; probably he was sincere in each mood of the moment; but he does not convince us as does the inspired tinker, that he really is charmed with the beauties of the country-side, or impressed with its ruggedness. Milton can occasionally give us the authentic touch of terror, or delight; and Shakespeare, the Warwickshire man, knows the flowers, and the sights and sounds of the country; the nip of winter's frosts, the buffetings of the winds, and the kiss of the zephyrs of spring; Spenser, too, in his *Faerie Queene*, has a secularized kind of Bunyan touch. But the company is few and select of those who took a real, sincere pleasure in these simple sights and sounds; and when the eighteenth century dawned, rural life was thought merely Bœotian; the rustics, boorish clodhoppers, and the scenes amidst which they lived their lives either as meadows, insipid, or, as hills and mountains, barren and affrighting.

We cannot, then, hope to place the Enchanted Ground; but we may commend the whole range of the Chilterns on their northern side as fitly comparable with Bunyan's description. The "northern side" is said advisedly, because, in general, the southern approach to the Chilterns is gradual and imperceptible. You are up, upon them, as it were, almost before you know of the approach; and are up there, looking surprised, northwards, down from a more or less abrupt edge. It is, therefore, along the northern foothills and the re-entering folds and valleys, if indeed anywhere,

that the Enchanted Ground might be sought.

And so we come to the last stages of this thrilling and deeply affecting journey, affecting and thrilling even if we do not consider the religious significance of it. The pilgrims come through a land of fruits and gardens to a broad river, across which, since there is no bridge they needs must pass by wading, if haply they may avoid the deep places that are ready to engulf them. Oddly enough, Bunyan does not tell us it was a dark river, which generally speaking of this allegory of death, it is the conventional thing to do. Here Christian has the greater difficulty in the passage than Hopeful experiences. He is almost gone, and is despairing, when at last his feet touch ground; and then they both are across, and come up to the gates of the Celestial City that is set upon a height and shines like gold. Here they produce their certificates, and the King reads them and is told that here are two pilgrims come from afar, for love of him. He commands the gate to be opened; and Christian and Hopeful enter and are given harps for praise and golden crowns for honour. Thus are their perils and sufferings at last rewarded.

But Ignorance, who comes after, and has found a ferryman to put him across, comes up to the gate, where, being challenged and finding he has no certificate, he is not admitted. Nay, worse. The King commands he shall be bound, hand and foot; and it was even so. He was bound and carried away to that door in the hillside which was the mouth of hell; and there thrust in. We cannot help but think this was rather extreme treatment for one who meant so well and had got so far. Bunyan, surely, is unnecessarily severe. For a space he has lost his sense of humour and declines upon mere savagery. It is the Puritan spirit in its darkest mood. The King himself

would not have permitted this dreadful fate, but might have given Ignorance admission and ordained him perhaps to a humble sphere in the Celestial City; possibly to burnish the golden crowns of the completely blest and to re-string their harps, on occasion. But the loving-kindness of the truly contracted pilgrims towards each other has no room for tenderness to such other pilgrims as have not partaken fully of all the perils all the way, and have supped full of its bitterness. It is the unequivocating sincerity of Bunyan and of the religious spirit of his age which thrusts from that glory to which almost he has attained, this unhappy one, and consigns him to that place of real, physical, eternal torment in which not merely Bunyan but men of all shades of religious thought then believed; happily for themselves unconscious that in so believing they were guilty of the greatest of blasphemies against the Most High.

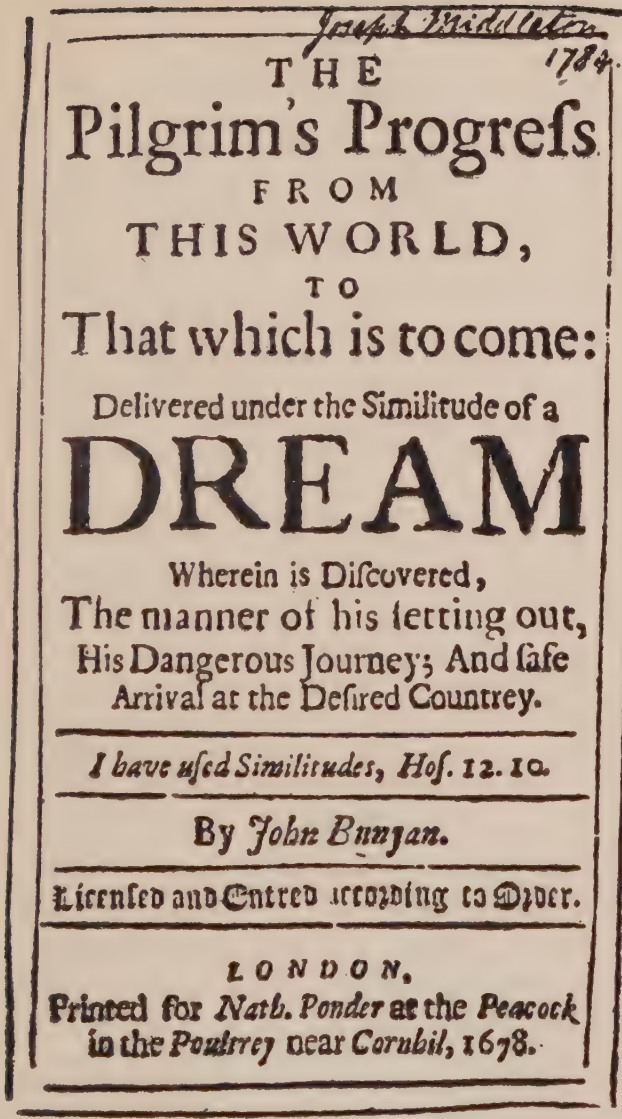
"*The Pilgrim's Progress* from this World, to that which is to come: delivered under the similitude of a *Dream*; wherein is discovered, the manner of his setting out, his dangerous journey; and safe arrival at the desired Countrey"—the twenty-third work of the sixty published works of John Bunyan, was published December 22nd, 1678, in London, by Nathaniel Ponder, at the sign of the Peacock, in the Poultry. The greater part of it was written in the Borough Prison of Bedford, in the Gatehouse of Bedford Bridge, during Bunyan's last imprisonment. It is a work by a man who, possessed of but little education, yet was gifted with an abounding genius, the liveliest fancy was inspired by a great fervour of religious enthusiasm, and spurred on to the work in an enforced seclusion that gave full scope to imagination. This man, of a natural eloquence, who had passed through such severe storms of the spirit and knew his Bible through and through, thought and wrote in the

stately language of Tyndale's Bible, with an elegance and eloquence of diction that is the wonder of all who read him ; exactly as the eloquence of his preaching amazed those who heard him. But what is not so generally recognized are his qualities of humour and humanity.

He had an ear attuned to the niceties of language, in speaking and in writing ; yet he could not spell many words correctly, as the first edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, as well as his surviving note-books, proves.

The first edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress* bears every evidence of having hurriedly been rushed to press, for it is not merely full of printer's errors, but the printer clearly had not the time to employ anyone to correct the author's own continual lapses from orthography, or to qualify his rustic expressions and homely grotesqueries. The pilgrims are " travailers," which indeed is well enough, if we seek the origin of the word " traveller " in the " travails," or hardships of travelling ; one gives a " morgage " ; the lions are " lyons " ; a carcase is a " carkass," a villain a " villian," and a brute a " bruit." " Widdows," " ecchos," " shaddows " and " hazzards " are met with ; and Apollyon is said to have " strodled" quite across the road. There are many more such ; as well as a good deal of a countryman's diction, colloquial and unliterary.

No doubt these peculiarities—one hesitates in writing of *The Pilgrim's Progress* to speak of " blemishes "—gave occasion to some to suggest that Bunyan was not truly the author of his own work ; while others, then and since, while allowing he wrote it, have busied themselves in seeking origins ; just as Shakespeare students have (with more success) sought originals for most of his works in what are now called " Foundation Plays " ; that is to say, the obscure dramatic works, with


Joseph Middleton
1784.

THE

Pilgrim's Progreſs

FROM

THIS WORLD,

TO

That which is to come:

Delivered under the Similitude of a

DREAM

Wherein is Diſcovered,
The manner of his ſetting out,
His Dangerous Journey; And ſafe
Arrival at the Deſired Countrey.

I have uſed Similitudes, Hoſ. 12. 10.

By *John Bunyan.*

Licenſed and Entred according to Order.

LONDON,
Printed for *Nath. Ponder* at the *Peacock*
in the *Poultrey* near *Corubil*, 1678.

TITLE-PAGE OF THE FIRST EDITION " THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS."

good stories but poor craftsmanship, that he happened upon and transmuted with his genius. But the only possible origins for *The Pilgrim's Progress* are the Biblical similitudes.

Bunyan was not easily to be credited by educated and unimaginative folk with the writing of what all recognized to be a masterpiece. He was moved, therefore, to write a metrical defence. He wrote it, characteristically, with much vigour :

Some say *The Pilgrim's Progress* is not mine,
Insinuating as if I would shine
In name and fame by the worth of another,
Like some made rich by robbing of their brother,
Or that so fond I am of being sire,
I'll father bastards, or, if need require,
I'll tell a lie in print to get applause.
I scorn it : John such dirt-heap never was
Since God converted him. Let this suffice
To show why I my " Pilgrim " patronize.

It came from mine own heart, so to my head,
And thence into my fingers trickled,
Then to my pen, from whence immediately
On paper I did dribble it daintily.

Manner and matter, too, was all mine own
Nor was it unto any mortal known
Till I had done it, nor did any then
By books, by wits, by tongues, or hand, or pen,
Add five words to it, or add half a line
Thereof : the whole, and every whit, is mine.

Also for THIS thine eye is now upon
The matter in this manner came from none,
But the same heart and head, fingers open,
As did the other. Witness all good men ;
For none in all the world, without a lie,
Can say that " this is mine," excepting I.

I write not this of any ostentation,
Nor 'cause I seek of men their commendation ;
I do it to keep them from such surmise,
As tempt them will my name to scandalize.
Witness my name, if anagram'd to thee
The letters make—" No honey in a B."

JOHN BUNYAN.

"This," in the verses above, was *The Holy War*, published in 1682, close upon five years after *The Pilgrim's Progress*. In that space of time eight editions had been called for. Everyone was reading it, and wondering how it was that "the tinker of Elstow" could be the author. Those who do not recognize that genius rises superior to circumstances are still in a condition of wonderment.

But there surely had been no occasion for questioning the authorship, for to *The Pilgrim's Progress* Bunyan had prefaced it with a metrical introduction:

When at the first I took my pen in hand,
Thus for to write, I did not understand
That I at all should make a little book
In such a mode. Nay, I had undertook
To make another, which when almost done
Before I was aware, I this begun.

And thus it was—I writing of the way
And race of saints in this our Gospel day,
Fell suddenly into an Allegory
About the journey and the way to glory
In more than twenty things which I set down.
This done, I twenty more had in my crown,
And these again began to multiply,
Like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly.
Nay then, thought I, if that you breed so fast
I'll put you by yourselves lest you at last
Should prove *ad infinitum*, and eat out
The book that I already am about.

Well, so I did, but yet I did not think
To show to all the world my pen and ink
In such a mode. I only thought to make
I know not what. Nor did I undertake
Merely to please my neighbours; no, not I.
I did it mine own self to gratify,
Neither did I but vacant seasons spend
In this my scribble; nor did I intend

But to divert myself in doing this
From worser thoughts which make me do amiss.

Thus I set pen to paper with delight,
And quickly had my thoughts in black and white ;
For having now my method by the end,
Still as I pulled it came ; and so I penned
It down : until at last it came to be
For length and breadth the bigness which you see.

Well, when I had thus put my ends together,
I showed them others, that I might see whether
They would condemn them, or them justify,
And some said, Let them live : some, Let them die ;
Some said, John, print it ; others, Not so,
Some said it might do good ; others said, No.

Now was I in a strait, and did not see
Which was the best thing to be done by me.
At last I thought, since you are thus divided,
I print it will ; and so the case decided.

The book was by no means complete, as we have it now, in the first edition. To the second and third editions, Bunyan added in all nearly one third more ; introducing in the second edition Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who is not found at all in the original. Also were added : Christian's parting from his wife and children ; the character of By-ends was introduced ; the second meeting with Evangelist ; Christian's talk with Goodwill at the wicket-gate about his turning aside out of the way ; and his conversation with Charity at the House Beautiful. Later, a few other verses were added to those already interspersed in the text.

Bunyan's verses, here and in his other works, must needs have astonished the professedly literary and other highly educated persons of the time as much as did his other achievements. Evidently he did not stay to polish them, for the lines do not always scan ; but to style them "doggerel," as has been done, is not just ; they have thought, perception, or often a very pretty imagery ; and generally they are well turned.

Those already quoted, describing how he came to write and to print his great work, are of a lively quality; and they have some turns remarkable in the work of a man like Bunyan. We meet the Latin *ad infinitum*. The phrase is not a recondite one, of course; but how came the homespun Bunyan to know it at all? We are left to suppose that he had the acquisitive, magpie, journalistic brain; that very useful accomplishment of hearing and of unconsciously registering in the memory all kinds of information, ready for use at need. It is a kind of equipment which serves the owner of it far better than does hard-won learning in the head of many a less sprack-witted scholar.

It was left, after the first few years of the tremendous popularity of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, for the appreciation of it gradually, not to diminish indeed, but for it to be taken rather more to the heart of the masses than of the classes. Macaulay, with an acuteness wholly admirable, has given a reason for its popular nature. He says "it is the only book of its kind that possesses a strong human interest, that while other allegories amuse the fancy, this has been read by thousands with tears." In short, let anyone not devoid of sensibility, attempt the reading of *The Pilgrim's Progress* aloud and see how far with it he can get without a break in the voice and a catch in the throat which precede those tears. The reason of it is this: that this great book tells of an ideal to which all wish to attain. It is above all doctrine; its appeal is the same to Jew or Christian; to Churchman or Dissenter. It is the most entirely lovable book in existence. Even to children who have not come to an understanding of its spiritual qualities this "spiritual Don Quixote," as Macaulay styles it, is enthralling.

Macaulay proceeds to point out that the book

was produced originally, in all its early editions, for the cottage and for the servants' hall. He thinks so because of the poor quality of the paper and print in those early editions, and the inferior type of engravings when the book first came to be illustrated. "In general," he says, "when the educated minority and the common people differ about the merit of a book, the opinion of the educated minority finally prevails. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is perhaps the only book about which, after the lapse of a hundred years, the educated minority has come over to the opinion of the common people."

Macaulay is, in general, right in this conclusion. The book was written to the address of the humbler folk, for the reason that religious beliefs were largely an affair of respective social strata, and in that day it was pretty certain that the upper classes would be Church of England people and the "common people," in the words of Macaulay, himself of Nonconforming stock, would be of the sects that did not see from the same angle either at the Church or with each other. But Bunyan, like he who builded better than he knew, had made a wider appeal than ever he or his publisher could have dreamed possible. The Dreamer dreamt an immortal book; he had no vision that Royalist as well as Puritan could take delight in it, that the peer as well as the peasant could prize this story. And certainly he would have held it impossible that Roman Catholics—with the deletion of that little matter of the enfeebled old Giant Pope—could find *The Pilgrim's Progress* as acceptable to themselves as to any.

Innumerable editions of the book have been issued; many artists have illustrated it; many have paid the sincerest admiration by writing imitations; and a few dunderheads have sought to condense, to expand, or even to "improve"

its English. It has been translated into every known language.

But who is there who reads these? The imitations themselves are many. Never before nor since was there a book so imitated or travestied. A good many of these imitations were put forth for rival sectarian objects. It is a curious sidelight upon the way in which the Society of Friends was regarded in Bunyan's own time (he, too, was fiercely opposed to them) to find "The Pilgrim's Progress from Quakerism to Christianity"; and astonishing to find Methodism arraigned in the same way. There was also a skit, "A Hue and Cry after Conscience; or the Pilgrim's Progress by Candle-Light." the "Pilgrimage of Tender Conscience," the "Pilgrimage of Good Intent"; the "Pilgrimage of Seek Truth"; the "Pilgrimage of Theophilus," the "Hindoo Pilgrim," the "Infant Pilgrim"; these are all religious or moral exercises. The political satirists were, of course, not lacking. Sir Robert Walpole, the cynical statesman, who held that "every man had his price," and proved his saying by his successful practice of bribery, was pilloried in "The Statesman's Progress; or, a Pilgrimage to Greatness," probably written by, or for, someone who had not the funds to follow Walpole's pernicious example. In it, Walpole figures as "Mr. Badman," rather unjustly, because he made no secret of his intentions at bribery and corruption. There would seem to be room for a newer "Statesman's Pilgrim's Progress" in our own time. Walpole was a frank and forthright person; but the modern pushing prevailers are artists, like You Know Who, of the glib tongue, at the head of the What's His Name administration. Bribery is practised, while the practitioners declare it, before heaven and earth, to have been a bad old way which is no longer followed.

A work called the *Progress of the Pilgrim by Good*

Intent in Jacobinical Times was a warning note directed against any leanings towards the political views which led to the excesses of the French Revolution. Viewed from another angle, the world is shown in *The Political Pilgrim's Progress* of 1839. In those pages Pilgrim is seen setting forth from the City of Plunder. The burden on his back is a heavy weight of taxes. Exceptionally, among these imitations it is extraordinarily amusing. Pilgrim seeks the City of Reform, there, it may be, to rid him of his burden. The people of the City of Plunder declare there is no such place as the City of Reform, others tell him it is far distant, and the way is full of dangers. Mr. Worldly Wiseman says it is a folly to be discontented ; not all can be wealthy. Others declare the Pilgrim's load is a great benefit to the bearer of it ; and Temporary and Expediency endeavour to seduce him into short-cuts, out of the true way. Then he fights with the Apollyon of Political Corruption (whom we have always with us), and comes to Vanity Fair, at which pensions, preferments, and decorations are offered as bribes for votes to maintain the social system. At last the Pilgrim wins to the City of Reform, where taxes are almost unknown and all men are free. Evidently the writer of that political Pilgrim's Progress was an optimist without warrant or power of prophetic insight. Early railway times produced even a railway and teetotal imitation : *The Drunkard's Progress, from the Station at Drouth to the General Terminus on the Dead Sea*, by John Bunyan, Junior, 1853. But the task of following all these futile, because for the most part forgotten, ingenuities is not worth the little interest to be derived from it.

Bunyan's is a rare book ; rarely good in its imagination and in its beautiful English ; and it is rare in the especial sense of the word used by the book-collector ; he who prizes first editions and

gives for them sumptuous prices—and never reads that which he has bought! For your book-collector of that genus values the book, *qua* literature, as naught; but greatly only in respect of its scarcity.

The first edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, "printed at the Peacock in the Poultrey," in 1678, is not the very rarest of first editions of any book; but very nearly it is that. Only six perfect copies of it are known. Before July of 1926, five only were known to exist. And then a Mr. Warner, who had a copy, left him by an aunt, bethought him of sending the old book to Sothebys, to be offered at auction. Not that Mr. Warner had any inkling at all of this rarity, or of the value that rarity implied. Nor did he know it to be a First Edition. He was not, you see, a book-collector; he knew nothing about books. That is quite evident when we hear what he said about this book, after it had been auctioned and had brought, in public bidding, six thousand eight hundred pounds. He said he "never attached any value to it at all," and that he thought it might perhaps fetch a shilling. But what traffic should Messrs. Sothebys, auctioneers of many precious things, have with books which might fetch a shilling apiece! There be many hopeful folk who possess old books, who send them to Messrs. Sotheby, hoping to get by them not a shilling, nor yet many shillings, but many pounds. All the auctioneers, and all the second-hand booksellers are familiar with those optimists with old and shabby folios and octavos who, imagining that a book has but to be old to be of great price, surge up to their places of business expecting a small fortune for what generally is of no value whatever. The second-hand bookseller is himself an optimist. He never knows the day when a First Folio Shakespeare may be brought him and

offered for what he will give. And it may safely be added that he never will know that day ! Nor is it likely in the least that the day will dawn that will bring him someone with a First Edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Greatly to the disgust—as well we may suppose—of the second-hand bookselling fraternity, Mr. Warner sent his copy to an auctioneer—and so got the full value of his unsuspected treasure, less, of course, commission ; which itself at that price was a good day's business. So little did Mr. Warner esteem what he had posted, that he did not trouble to register the parcel!

Bunyan had at the time of his writing *The Pilgrim's Progress* the intention of following it up with a second part. We perceive that intention in the last lines of the metrical conclusion to Christian's journey, in which he concludes :

> What of my dross thou findest there, be bold
> To throw away, but yet preserve the gold ;
> What if my gold be wrapped up in ore ?—
> None throws away the apple for the core.
> But if thou shalt cast all away as vain,
> I know not but 'twill make me dream again.

He at first, however, contemplated a contrasting sequel, which was to show by the like method the downward path of one who had begun well but continually declined until he came to the worst of ends. This project was never fulfilled in that form, but the work, cast in a different mould, was published in 1680. It was *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*. We have Bunyan's own authority for this, in the preface to that book, where he says, "As I was considering with myself what I had written concerning the Progress of the Pilgrim from this world to glory ; and how it had been acceptable to many in this nation ; it came again into my mind to write, as then, of him that was going to Heaven, so now of the Life and Death of the Ungodly and of their travel from this world to Hell."

CHAPTER IX

The Second Part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*

IN the meanwhile, in 1683, one, "T.S.," produced what he called *The Second Part of the Pilgrim's Progress*. It traced Christian's journey all over again, "From this World of Wickedness and Misery to an Eternity of Holiness and Felicity; Exactly Described under the Similitude of a Dream." This person said he intended "to supply a fourfold defect which I observe in the brevity of that discourse . . . to deliver the whole in such serious and spiritual phrases that may prevent that lightness and laughter which the reading of some passages occasions in some vain and frothy minds." The author wanted more doctrine and less fairy tale, so to say; and he desired to promote "The giving of Books of this nature at Funerals, instead of Rings, Gloves, Wine, or Biskit."

There were other imitations of Bunyan's unexpectedly successful fantasy. He refers to these in his very lengthy metrical introduction to his own second part:

> . . . Some there be
> That counterfeit the Pilgrim and his name
> Seek, by disguise, to seem the very same;
> And by that means have wrought themselves into
> The hands and houses of I know not who.
>
> 'Tis true, some have of late, to counterfeit
> My Pilgrim, to their own my title set;
> Yea, others, half my name and little too
> Have stitched to their book, to make them do;
> But yet they, by their features, do declare
> Themselves not mine to be, whose'er they are.

Bunyan's Second Part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*,

published in 1684, concerns the adventures of Christian's wife Christiana, and her four boys, setting out from that same City of Destruction whence Christian had fled, to follow him to the Celestial City. As a sequel, this book has met with only that modified success or approval which is the ill-fate of all sequels. There was never a sequel which has been allowed to possess the merits of the original; even though it were as good as, or perhaps better than, the first imagining. An Editor of *Punch*, Sir Francis Burnand, although himself not much more than a belated punster, had the wit to see this. When someone observed that *Punch* was not so good as it had been, he replied that it never was.

Those who will allow the Second Part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* to equal the first are few and difficult to find. But it is a worthy companion to the first story. The author's invention does not flag; he has, in the characters of Mr. Timorous, Mrs. Bat's Eyes, Mrs. Inconsiderate, Mrs. Light Mind, and Mrs. Know Nothing all his old humorous fecundity; and there are the men, Heedless, Too Bold, Mr. Despondency, and that noble Great Heart, all well drawn. We are confident that some of the characters in Christian's journey were drawn from personal observation; and in this Second Part we feel that in those of Christiana and Mercy, who accompanies here, Bunyan was drawing the portraits, firstly of his second wife, and, secondly, of his first. They are strongly contrasted individualities, too marked to be merely inventions. The deep pathos of the concluding pages in this book is far more moving than the last scenes in Christian's pilgrimage. Of course, the book necessarily suffers in some degree from the pilgrims following the route already taken by Christian, and it is more diffuse. So much allowed, there is little falling off.

The book opens in a different way. The Dreamer in his vision meets an old gentleman, one Mr. Sagacity, with whom he walks and sees in the distance the City of Destruction. "It is a populous place," says this gentleman, "but possessed with a very ill-conditioned and idle sort of people." Many therein well remembered that man, Christian who sometime past set out for the Celestial City, and heard of his safe arrival there, and how well he lives in that place, in favour with the King.

"But, pray, sir," asked the Dreamer, "while it is fresh in my mind, do you hear anything of his wife and children? Poor hearts, I wonder in my mind what they do."

Then answered Sagacity, "Who! Christiana and her sons? They are like to do as well as Christian himself; for though they all played the fool at the first, and would by no means be persuaded by either the tears or entreaties of Christian, yet second thoughts have wrought wonderfully with them; so they have packed up, and are also gone after him."

There had appeared to Christiana in her sleep, one Secret, who bade her follow and go to "the wicket-gate, yonder, over the plain." There, accordingly, in spite of the protestations of her neighbours, Mrs. Timorous, Mrs. Bat's Eyes, and Mrs. Know Nothing, did Christiana and her sons repair, and Mercy with them, and entered in at the gate.

But firstly they had to come to and overpass the Slough of Despond. They found that place, and saw that "notwithstanding the command of the King to make this place for pilgrims good, yet it was rather worse than formerly. So I asked if that was true. Yes, said the old gentleman, too true; for that many there be that pretend to be the King's labourers, and that say they are for

mending the King's highway, that bring dirt and dung, instead of stones, and so mar, instead of mending."

That passage no doubt reflects the experience, not only of Bunyan, but also of travellers in general who went between Hockliffe and Dunstable, along the main road, on which, as already has been shown, was situated that very real slough from which Bunyan drew his picture. It was promised to be bettered, but it grew steadily worse; and for the very reason that Bunyan gives. Instead of bringing proper materials for road-mending, there was brought any kind of dirt or refuse that lay handy. This way of dealing with roads continued until at the opening of the nineteenth century that pioneer of road-reform, John Loudon Macadam, introduced his well-known so-called "Macadamising" method.

After Christiana and Mercy had passed through the wicket-gate and were on their way, the boys plucked some fruit that hung over a wall that fenced in the way, not knowing that it belonged to the enemy. And then two ill-favoured men sought to intercept Christiana and Mercy. Christiana "spurned at them with her feet"—that is, she kicked them—and cried "Murder!" whereupon help came and the ill-favoured ones fled. So the pilgrims came to the Interpreter's House, and as they approached, they heard much talking within, and the name of Christiana herself mentioned. Those there were indeed talking of her and of her intention of going on pilgrimage; for already there had been much rumour of her purpose. The door was opened by a damsel named Innocent, who enquired who they were and what they would have. When she heard it was Christiana, she ran within and said, "Can you think who is at the door? There is Christiana and her children, and her companion; and all waiting for entertainment

here. Then they all leaped for joy and went and told their Master."

When at length, after being made welcome at the House of the Interpreter, it was time for them to be going, the Interpreter called for a man-servant of his, one Great Heart, and bade him take sword and helmet and shield, and accompany the women to the house called Beautiful, where next they would rest. So Great Heart led the way. And presently they came to the place where Christian had met Simple, and Sloth and Presumptuous, who had lain and slept in the way ; and lo ! they were there, hanged up in irons, a little way on the other side. Mercy asked Great Heart who were these men, and for what reason they were hanged there. To which Great Heart replied that they were men of very bad qualities. They had no mind to be pilgrims themselves, and tried to persuade others out of that course. They had turned several out of the way ; Slow Pace, Short-wind, and No Heart ; together with one Linger-after-Lust, and another, Sleepy Head, and a young woman called Dull. And so they were hanged. To this Christiana replied that they had but what they deserved, and that there should have been a plate of iron or brass engraved with their names and crimes, left there, as a warning to others. Great Heart said that had been done, as they would see, a little further. Mercy for her part, said " No, no ; let them hang and their names rot, and their crimes live for ever against them. I think it a high favour that they were hanged before we came thither."

The reader at this point probably will arrive at the conclusion that this damsel, Mercy, was wrongly named.

Then they came to the foot of the Hill Difficulty, even as Christian had done ; and Great Heart showed them the spring at which Christian drank.

Then, he said, it was clear, and good, but now it had become dirty with the feet of some who were not desirous of pilgrims quenching their thirst at that place.

And then he showed them the spot where Christian had met with Formality and Hypocrisy, who had lost themselves, at the foot of the hill. These misleading side-tracks were now, as he pointed out, stopped up with chains, posts, and a ditch ; but there were those who yet would choose to adventure that way, rather than take the pains to go up the hill. They would even, when the King's servants pointed out that they were in the wrong way, rail at them and still choose to go the dangerous paths, even though cautionary notices had been put up, and a hedge planted across.

When they were themselves climbing the hill, Christiana began to pant, and said " No marvel if they that love their ease more than their souls choose to themselves a smoother way." Then Mercy declared she must sit down ; and the children began to cry.

" Come, come," said Great Heart ; " sit not down here ; for a little above is the Prince's arbour."

When they were come to the arbour, they were very willing to sit down, for all were in a pelting heat. Mercy said, " How sweet is rest to them that labour."

When they approached the House Beautiful, they met the lions, which were backed by Grim the Giant, who withstood them in the way, so that Great Heart fought with him and slew him, before they could come to the porter's lodge. It was towards night when they got there, because of the encounter with the giant, Grim ; but Mr. Watchful, the porter, admitted them ; and when Great Heart had withdrawn, to return to the House of the Interpreter, as he had no instructions to

escort them farther, the porter rang his bell, which was answered by a damsel, Humble Mind. When she had told those within that Christiana and her sons were come hither, there was great rejoicing. They were refreshed and conducted to the room that Christian himself had been given ; and in the morning an invitation was given them to stay ; and so they did, for a month or more.

There was in the house a Mr. Brisk, " a man of some breeding and that pretended to religion " ; but a man that stuck very close to the world. So he came once or twice to Mercy and offered love to her. Now, Mercy was of a fair countenance, and therefore the more alluring."

Nothing came of this, for it soon was seen that their temperaments clashed. During this stay, Matthew, the eldest of Christiana's boys, fell ill, and a physician was had to him. It was found he had eaten something that had disagreed with him ; nothing less, indeed, than some fruit from Beelzebub's orchard. The " ancient and well-approved " physician, Mr. Skill, made up some pills that were to be taken three at a time, fasting, in a quarter of a pint of the tears of repentence. Matthew was loth to take the pills, but they did him good ; and again all was well.

When the time was come for their setting forward, they caused a message to be sent to the Interpreter, asking if again they might have Mr. Great Heart as an escort against the perils of the way they must go. So he was sent, and glad was he to be their champion. Thus we see them, after Christiana had given the porter a gold angel as a token of their appreciation of their kindness, going down the hill together, with Prudence, and Charity and Piety. At the foot of the hill those damsels returned, and the pilgrims went on, into the Valley of Humiliation ; which, said Great Heart, was very much what the individual pilgrim made of it.

It was good, fat land, and although some, like Christian, had met fiends there, yet (without disparagement to Christian) that was because they already had made slips by the way. To say truth, the soil of this valley was very fruitful, and brought forth by handfuls.

As they went, they came upon a shepherd-boy, who sang :

He that is down needs fear no fall ;
He that is low, no pride ;
He that is humble, ever shall
Have God to be his guide.
I am content with what I have,
Little be it, or much ;
And, Lord, contentment still I crave
Because Thou sayest such
Fullness to such a burden is
That go on pilgrimage ;
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best, from age to age.

Said Great Heart, " I will dare to say that this boy lives a merrier life, and wears more of that herb called heart's-ease in his bosom than he that is clad in silk and velvet."

Then Samuel, one of the boys, asked Great Heart where it was that his father had the fight with Apollyon ; to which their guide told them it was in a narrow passage called Forgetful Green, the most dangerous place in all those parts. Then they came to the very place where that battle had been fought, and still to be seen there were the footprints of them ; and they saw that the very stones in that place had been broken by the random blows of Christian's sword. Also there were yet marks of his blood there. And a monument had been set up, telling the story of that dreadful contest.

From thence they came through the Valley of the Shadow, but not by night, as poor Christian had done. Yet perils were there, and a pit, with

"great stinks and loathsome smells." They passed by the pit, and then were bidden by Great Heart to look to their feet, by reason of the snares; and passing by them they saw a man lying to one side his flesh all torn and rent. That, their guide and champion told them, was one Heedless, who had lain there a great while, dead. One with him, Take Heed by name, escaped.

So they came to the end of the Valley, and to the cave where Christian had seen Giant Pope gibbering evilly at him, but powerless to do him a mischief. That giant did not on this occasion appear to be at home; but another, named Maul, was there. His peculiar prey was young pilgrims, whom he was used to spoil with sophistry. "How many times," he called out to Great Heart, "have you been forbidden to do these things?"

"What things?" asked Great Heart.

"What things?" quoth the Giant; "you know what things; but I will put an end to your trade."

"But, pray," said Great Heart, "before we fall to it, let us understand wherefore we must fight."

Now the women and children stood trembling, and knew not what to do.

Quoth the giant, "You rob the country, and rob it with the worst of thefts."

"These are but generals," returned Great Heart. "Come to particulars, man."

Then said the giant, "Thou practisest the craft of a kidnapper; thou gatherest up women and children, and carriest them into a strange country; to the weakening of my Master's kingdom."

But now Great Heart replied, "I am a servant of the God of heaven; my business is to persuade sinners to repentance; I am commanded to do my endeavour to turn men, women, and children from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and if this be indeed the ground

of thy quarrel, let us fall to it as soon as thou wilt."

Then the giant came up, and Great Heart went to meet him; and as he went, he drew his sword; but the giant had a club. So, with out more ado, they fell to it; and at the first blow the giant struck Great Heart down upon one of his knees. With that, the women and children cried out; so Great Heart, recovering himself, laid about him in full lusty manner, and gave the giant a wound in his arm; thus he fought for the space of an hour, to that height of heat, that the breath came out of the giant's nostrils as doth the heat out of a boiling cauldron.

Then they sat down to rest them; but Great Heart betook him to prayer; also the women and children did nothing but sigh and cry all the time that the battle did last.

When they had rested them, and taken breath, they both fell to it again, and Great Heart, with a full blow, fetched the giant down to the ground.

"Nay, hold, and let me recover," quoth he; so Great Heart fairly let him get up. So to it they went again and the giant missed but little of all-to-breaking Great Heart's skull with his club.

Great Heart then ran to him and pierced him under the fifth rib. With that the giant began to faint, and could hold up his club no longer. Then Great Heart seconded his blow, and smote the head of the giant from his shoulders.

Before they went on their way, they raised a pillar and set the giant's head on the top. So they came to that little mound, giving a prospect of the country, where Christian had met Faithful. Here they sat and rested, and ate and drank and made merry.

Presently, they all again addressed themselves to the way, and came to an oak, under which they found an old pilgrim, asleep. Great Heart awakened him. "What's the matter?" asked

the old man, "Who are you, and what is your business here?"

"Come, man," said Great Heart, "be not so hot; here are none but friends." But the old man got up and stood upon his guard.

Then said the guide, "My name is Great Heart; I am the guide of these pilgrims which are going to the Celestial Country."

Then said Honest, for that was his name, "I cry you mercy; I feared that you had been of the company of those that some time ago did rob Little Faith of his money; but now I look better about me, I perceive you are honester people."

"Why," asked Great Heart, "what would, or could you have done, to have helped yourself, if we indeed had been of that company?"

"Done!" replied Honest, "why, I would have fought as long as breath had been in me; and had I so done, I am sure you could never have given me the worst of it; for a Christian man can never be overcome, unless he should yield of himself."

"Well said, father Honest," returned Great Heart, "for by this I know thou art a cock of the right kind."

The old gentleman said he came from the town of Stupidity, which lay about four degrees beyond the City of Destruction. It was a cold and sunless place. So they went on, talking of a certain Mr. Fearing, and another, Self Will, who had gone on pilgrimage and had been very troublesome. Soon Christiana said she would be glad of an inn for herself and her boys, for they were weary. Mr. Honest said there was an inn, a little way ahead, kept by one Gaius. "When they came to the door, they went in, not knocking, for folks use not to knock at the door of an inn." They called for the master of the house. When he came and they asked if they might lie there for the night, he

said "Yes," if they were true pilgrims, for his house was for none but pilgrims. When they had been allotted their rooms, they asked the landlord what they might have for supper.

"It is late," said Gaius, "so we cannot conveniently go out to seek food, but such as we have, you shall be welcome to, if that will content."

Then he went down and spoke to the cook, whose name was Taste-that-which-is-good. Supper was made ready, and all heartily partook of it. The inn was so good, the entertainment so excellent, and their host so obliging that they, who had come for a night stayed a month; and in that while Matthew, the eldest son of Christiana, was married to Mercy. But meanwhile, Gaius had a little commission for Great Heart, that doughty fighter, to fulfil. About a mile from the inn dwelt a giant, Slay Good, who caused great annoyance on the King's highway in those parts. So they ventured out, and duly found the giant, in whose hands was an unfortunate pilgrim, Feeble Mind by name. The giant, who was a flesh-eater, was in fact, about to pick the bones of his captive. Great Heart challenged the giant to come out of his cave, and when he did, they fought for an hour, at the end of which the giant was slain and Mr. Feeble Mind released. He, it seems, had come from the town of Uncertain. He was a man feeble alike of mind and body, but he had a mind to be a pilgrim. Other pilgrims had been compassionate of his shortcomings, and had been kind to him, but when he was come up to Assault Lane, he fell in with that man-eating giant.

They had Mr. Feeble Mind back to the inn. While they were talking there came one, running, who said that, about a mile and a half away, upon the road, there was one Not Right, struck dead with a thunderbolt. He had been with Feeble Mind when the giant took him, but had escaped.

When the time had come for the pilgrims to leave the inn, Great Heart called for the reckoning, but the landlord said that at his house it was not the custom for pilgrims to pay for their entertainment. He boarded them by the year, but looked for his pay from the Good Samaritan who had promised him at his return, "whatsoever charge he was at, faithfully to repay."

Feeble Mind hesitated at the door, on their departure, and was most unwilling to go along with the pilgrims, to be a hindrance to them, although Great Heart told him it was one of his duties to help along the way such as he. Then up came Ready-to-Halt, limping on his crutches; and he and Feeble Mind went along together, suitably as companions. Thus they entered the town of Vanity, where Great Heart knew of a friend to pilgrims, one Mr. Mnason (where did Bunyan get that name?) who was a "Cyprusian." He welcomed all of them, and they stayed long at this good man's house. And there two other of Christiana's sons were married to his daughters, Grace and Martha. Here also were Mr. Contrite, Mr. Holy Man, Mr. Dare-not-lie, and Mr. Penitent. During their stay, there came word of a monster that at certain seasons was in the way of coming to the town and devouring its women and children; and it was thought that Mr. Great Heart might well slay him. So the four men and Great Heart went forth to do battle; and although they did not manage wholly to dispose of him, they did him a great hurt, and took much favour thereby in the town, which by this time was not quite so ill a place as it had been when Christian had passed through, and Faithful had been martyred there.

At length they all left the town, and came, after some time, to the neighbourhood of Doubting Castle. A proposal was made to go up to that stronghold and kill Giant Despair and destroy the

place ; and so the six men : Christiana's four sons, Great Heart, and old Honest, went up to the place and knocked loudly at the gate ; while the others watched fearfully at a distance.

The giant came to the gate, Diffidence, his wife, followed. " Who and what is he," asked the giant, " that is so hardy as after this manner to molest the Giant Despair."

Great Heart replied : " I demand of thee that thou open thy gates for my entrance. Prepare thyself also to fight, for I am come to take away thy head, and to demolish Doubting Castle."

So the giant harnessed himself and went out ; and the six men set upon him. Old Honest, when Diffidence came up to help her husband, cut her down. They then brought down the giant, and though he was very loth to die, and had as many lives as a cat, Great Heart at last was the death of him. Then they demolished the castle. It took six days to accomplish that task. In its dungeons they found one, Mr. Despondency, and his daughter, Much Afraid. When all was done, they were jocund and merry, and, as Christiana could play upon the viol, and Mercy on the lute, they danced. As for Mr. Despondency, " the music was not much to him ; he was for feeding, rather than dancing, for that he was almost starved. But he revived after Christiana had given him to eat and drink. After this, and setting up one of those memorials they were so much given to building, they went on and came to the Delectable Mountains, where the shepherds tended their flocks." Then said the shepherds : " This is a comfortable company. You are welcome to us, for we have comfort for the feeble, as for the strong. Our Prince has an eye to what is done to the least of these ; therefore infirmity must not be a block to our entertainment."

So they had them to the Palace door, and then

said unto them, "Come in, Mr. Feeble Mind; Come in, Mr. Ready-to-Halt; Come in, Mr. Despondency, and Mrs. Much Afraid, his daughter. "These, Mr. Great Heart," said the shepherds, "we call by name, for that they are most subject to draw back; but as for you and the rest, that are strong, we leave you to your wonted liberty." Then said Great Heart, "I see that grace doth shine in your faces, and that you are my Lord's shepherds, indeed; for that you have not pushed these diseased neither with side nor shoulder, but have rather strewed their way into the Palace with flowers, as you should."

When morning was come, the shepherds took them all upon some new places in the mountains, and showed them Mount Marvel and then Mount Innocent, where they saw a man clothed all in white, and two men casting dirt upon him, but the more dirt they threw, his raiment remained as white as before. The men were named Prejudice and Ill-will; and the man they could not defile was Godly Man.

Then the pilgrims were had to Mount Charity, and were shown a man with a bundle of cloth, out of which he cut coats and garments for the poor that stood about him; yet his bundle or roll of cloth, was never the less. Then they were taken to a place where was one Fool, with another, Want-wit, engaged in washing an Ethiopian, with intent to make him white; but the more they washed him, the blacker he was. The moral of this, it appears, was that "Thus it shall be with the vile person; all means used to set such an one a good name shall, in conclusion, tend but to make him more abominable."

When they went forward, they came to the place where Little Faith was robbed, "and there stood a man with his sword drawn, and his face all bloody. Then said Mr. Great Heart, "What art thou?"

The man made answer, saying, "I am one whose name is Valiant-for-Truth. I am a pilgrim, and am going to the Celestial City. Now, as I was in my way, there were three men did beset me, and propounded unto me these three things: 1, Whether I would become one of them; or 2, Or go back from whence I came; 3, Or die upon the place. To the first I answered I had been a true man a long season, and therefore it could not be expected that I now should cast in my lot with thieves. Then they demanded what I would say to the second. So I told them that the place from whence I came had I not found incommodity there, I had not forsaken it at all; but finding it altogether unsuitable to me, and very unprofitable for me, I forsook it for this way. Then they asked me what I said to the third. And I told them, My life cost me more dear far, than that I should lightly give it away. Besides, you have nothing to do, thus to put things to my choice; wherefore, at your peril be it, if you meddle. Then these three; to wit, Wildhead, Inconsiderate and Pragmatic, drew upon me, and I also drew upon them.

"So we fell to it, one against three, for the space of above three hours. They have left upon me, as you see, some of the marks of their valour, and have also carried away with them some of mine."

Then they took and washed away the stains of the fight, and refreshed him. What countryman, it was asked, was he?

Valiant-for-Truth said he was of Dark Land, but was led to leave it by hearing tales of Christian's pilgrimage.

Going on their way, all together, Great Heart leading, and Valiant-for-Truth guarding the rear, they came to the Enchanted Ground, now all grown over with briars and thorns. Here was an

Enchanted Arbour, in which, if a man sits, or sleeps, it is a question, say some, whether ever he shall rise or wake again in this world. They rested not, and came then upon a mist and darkness that was sorry going, not only for that they scarce could see one another, but also by reason of the dirt and slabbiness of the ground. Nor was there so much as one inn or victualling house, therein to refresh the feebler sort. One cried, "I am down," while another called "Ho! where are you?" and a third, "The bushes have set such fast hold of me, I think I cannot get away from them."

There was another arbour, a beautiful one, in their way at this weariful place, with comfortable couches and settles. But it was called "The Slothful's Friend," and not meet for them. Two men lay asleep in it; they were Heedless and Too-Bold. The pilgrims went to these two, if so be they might wake them and warn them of their danger. They shook them and the sleepers answered, but in their sleep only; and so the pilgrims left the men where they lay; and went forward by the light of a lantern in the darkness. This Enchanted Ground, it appeared, was one of the last refuges the enemy to pilgrims has secured. It stands at the end of the long and weary way; for the enemy thinks, when will these fools be so desirous to sit down, and when so like to be weary, as when almost at their journey's end? Thus it is that the Enchanted Ground is placed so near to the Land of Beulah.

When they were come off this perilous region, and it grew light, they saw a man on his hands and knees who was speaking earnestly, as to one above. And when he had finished, he rose and made to run towards the Celestial City. Great Heart called after him "Soho! friend, let us have your company." So the man stopped, and

they came up with him. Valiant-for-Truth knew him, and said he was one Standfast, a right good pilgrim. Standfast blushed at this commendation.

The reason of his praying, and then arising from his knees and running, was that he had met one Madam Bubble; and hardly escaped from her wiles. Old Honest said, "Madame Bubble, is she not a tall, comely dame, something of a swarthy complexion?"

"Right," said Standfast, "you hit it, she is such an one."

"Doth she not speak very smoothly?" continued Old Honest, "and give you a smile at the end of a sentence?"

"You fall right upon it again," said Standfast; "for these are her very actions."

"Doth she not wear a great purse by her side; and is not her hand often in it, fingering her money, as if that was her heart's delight?"

"It is just so: had she stood by, all this while, you could not more amply have set her forth, before me, nor have better described her features."

"This woman," said Great Heart, "is a witch, and it is by virtue of her sorceries that this ground is enchanted."

Then came they to the Land of Beulah, that pleasant land just this side Jordan; that comfortable country of peace and rest, where weary pilgrims may refresh them in the King's orchards and gardens, before they cross that river.

In this manner the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* approaches its conclusion. As a whole, it is unequal; and, the route followed being that already taken by Christian, much of any opportunities for invention is lacking. There are, too, some passages which one could wish away; but in this concluding part, more lengthy than that in Christian's travels, Bunyan rises to a degree of

pathos he has not reached hitherto. He tears, in his description of the calls, one by one, and two by two, for the pilgrims to cross the river, at our hearts, and we read him with tears that will not be gainsaid. It is in the implications, of course, rather than in the actual description, that he thus affects us. And, as all *The Pilgrim's Progress* is implication—as we come to it knowing that, we cannot read this solemn, yet joyous, end to all their trials without being deeply touched.

While the pilgrims waited in the pleasant land for the good time when they should cross the river, "there was a post come from the Celestial City with matter of great importance to one Christiana, the wife of Christian the Pilgrim. So enquiry was made for her, and the house was found out where she was; so the post presented her with a letter, the contents whereof were 'Hail, good woman! I bring thee tidings that the Master calleth for thee and expecteth that thou shouldest stand in this presence in the clothes of immortality, within these ten days.'

"When he had read this letter to her, he gave her therewith a sure token that he was a true messenger, and was come to bid her make haste to be gone. The token was an arrow with a point sharpened with love, let easily into her heart, which by degrees wrought so effectually with her, that at the time appointed she must be gone.

"When Christiana saw that her time was come, and that she was the first of the company to go over, she called for Mr. Great Heart, and told him how matters were. So he told her he was heartily glad of the news, and could have been glad had the post come for him."

So Christiana bade farewell to all that company and crossed over.

"In process of time there came a post to the town again, and his business was with Mr. Ready-

to-Halt. So he enquired him out, and said to him, 'I am come to thee in the name of Him thou hast loved, and followed, though upon crutches; and my message is to tell thee that He expects thee at his table, to sup with him in his Kingdom. The next day after Easter, therefore, prepare thyself for this journey.'"

Then he also gave him a token that he was a true messenger, saying, "I have broken thy golden bowl, and loosed thy silver cord."

So he also went his way. The last words he was heard to say were "Welcome, life!"

"After this, Mr. Feeble Mind had tidings brought him that the post sounded his horn at his chamber door. So he bade farewell, saying, 'I have nothing to leave, wherefore, then should I make a will? As for my feeble mind, that I will leave behind me, for I have no need of that in the place whither I go. Nor is it worth bestowing upon the poorest pilgrim; wherefore, when I am gone, I desire that you, Mr. Valiant, would bury it in a dunghill.'" This was done, so he went over to the other side.

"When days had many of them passed away, Mr. Despondency was sent for; for a post was come, and brought this message: 'Trembling man, these are to summon thee to be ready with thy King by the next Lord's day, to shout for joy for thy deliverance from all thy doubtings.'"

So he also went over, and with his daughter, Much Afraid. His last words were: "Farewell night, welcome day." His daughter went over singing, but none could understand what she said.

"Then it came to pass, a while after, that there was a post in the town that enquired for Mr. Honest. So he came to his house, and delivered to his hand these lines: "Thou art commanded to be ready against this day seven-night, to present thyself before the Lord, at his Father's house. . . .

Now, the river at that time overflowed the banks in some places, but Mr. Honest in his lifetime had spoken to one Good Conscience to meet him there, the which he also did, and lent him his hand, and so helped him over."

Then went Valiant-for-Truth. "My sword," he said, "I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my carriage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles who now will be my rewarder."

"So he passed over, and the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

Is not that one of the most affecting phrases in the whole range of literature; so simple and unadorned with needless verbiage, and yet so compact with meaning! In itself it stirs the heart like the sound of the trumpet.

Then there came a summons for Standfast. "His Master was not willing that he should be so far from him any longer."

Before he went, he bade Great Heart, who was going back—his business being to escort pilgrims—to take news of how they had come to the place of their desire. So he hastened away, and there was a great calm upon the river when he entered it.

"As for Christian's children," concludes this second part, "I did not stay where I was till they were gone over. Also, since I came away, I heard one say that they were yet alive, and so would be for the increase of the Church in that place where they were, for a time.

"Shall it be my lot to go that way again, I may give those that desire it an account of what I here am silent about. Meanwhile, I bid my reader, Adieu."

He never "went that way again." That is, he did not write a Third Part, as he seems to have contemplated. But there seems to be some

mystery about it. A Third Part, appearing in 1693, although it does not specifically declare itself to be Bunyan's work, has a preface signed " J.B.," and begins with a specious air of being by the same author : " I fell asleep again, and the Visions of my Head returned upon me ; I dreamed another Dream."

It was true enough that one who owned the initials " J.B." was concerned in this ; but he was not Bunyan. He was a publisher, one Joseph Blare, at the sign of the " Looking Glass " on London Bridge ; one who already had issued works pretending to be those of Bunyan. It was sufficient for his purpose to produce an imitation and merely to suggest it was a genuine Bunyan book. The deluded public did the rest. And even now, although the deception long since was exposed, this spurious Third Part often is supposed to be genuine. Bunyan's own publisher, Nathaniel Ponder, specifically denounced the imitation : " The Third Part now abroad was not done by Bunyan. But the true copy left by him will be published by Nat. Ponder." Whether Ponder held, or did not hold, that " true copy " no man knows. Certain it is that he never published it. Ponder was, as we cannot fail to see, indignant. He prints on the back of the title to the thirteenth edition of the First Part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, issued in 1693, a further denunciation : " *The Pilgrim's Progress* ; the Third Part : in a Dream, Printed in 1692, is an Imposter thrust into the world by a nameless author, and would insinuate to the Buyers that 'tis Bunyan's, by adding a false Account of his Life and Death ; not compleating the work as is said or The Skeleton of his Designs and the main of his Book Done by him as a Third Part remains with Nath. Ponder, which when convenient time serves shall be Published."

A paper was read in 1915 before the St. Paul's

Ecclesiological Society by Mr. H. P. K. Skipton, on the subject of the country of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, in which the author contended that the Pilgrims' Way, that well-known ancient track in Hampshire, Surrey and Kent, is the real line of country intended by Bunyan. Mr. Skipton, with some regret, came to that conclusion, because of his own early associations with Bedfordshire. He would rather have held to the generally received belief in the Delectable Mountains being the Chiltern Hills, as seen from Elstow and Barton-le-Clay, and in all the other recognized landmarks. He would have us therefore, look upon St. Martha's Hill, near Guildford, and St. Catherine's Hill, as the Hill Difficulty and other hills named in Bunyan's work, and tells us there is a "Doubting Castle" on Walton Heath. He sees in the former "hammer-ponds" of this region, where the industry of smelting iron-ore was carried on, the groanings and dismal noises, the sparks and flames of the "Valley of the Shadow of Death" which we associate with Millbrook. But he does not attempt to find there, in Surrey, the originals of either the "House of the Interpreter," or the "House Beautiful."

He thinks when Bunyan mentions the Hill of Lucre and the Silver Mine, he had in view the great chalk-quarries in the Downs.

But these ascriptions do not convince me. We have seen how well Elstow Place and the mansion at Houghton Conquest tally with Bunyan's description of the "House Beautiful" and their situation; we find all we need in the Chiltern Hills at Sharpenhoe and Totternhoe to satisfy us; and at Millbrook we have a convincing model for "The Valley of the Shadow"; while the "Slough of Despond" clearly was situated between Dunstable and Hockliffe. Finally, there cannot be room for doubting that by the "Silver Mine" Bunyan

meant—not chalk-quarries—but a place very well known in his own time: at Pulloxhill, the spot where it was thought gold had been discovered.

When the author of that paper goes on to say, what is very true, that *The Pilgrim's Progress* was of old in most farmhouses and cottages, and that the farmhouse people and cottagers of Surrey found resemblances to the scenes of Christian's journey in the hills and vales of their own surroundings, he really weakens his argument; for naturally these folk, living by the ancient Pilgrims' Way could not help drawing these similitudes.

The North Downs, throughout Surrey and Kent, disclose scenery more striking and rugged than are most parts of the Chiltern Hills; although by no means more beautiful. It is not, therefore, altogether surprising that the countryfolk of those parts, unacquainted with the circumstances of Bunyan's life, or those in which his great work came to be written, should seek, and easily should find, places in their own regions which fit conveniently into the story. They long ago named a not very remarkable prehistoric tumulus on Walton Heath "Doubting Castle," and it will be found marked on Ordnance maps of that place; misspelled "Dowding." But the spot is no very striking one, and compares unfavourably with the bold and romantic mounds and ditches of Cainhoe Castle, the Bedfordshire original of Giant Despair's stronghold.

The golfers who infest Walton Heath are sometimes impressed by occasional ancient countrymen of that locality with this story; and those who carry away recollections of it spread the tale; but you have only to visit Bunyan's own countryside to be convinced.

Of course, the name "Doubting Castle," for this mound on Walton Heath came on to the map

in the usual way of such things when the first Ordnance Survey was being made, at the close of the eighteenth century, and the opening years of the nineteenth. The surveyors obtained the names of small places and wayside curiosities from the unlettered rustics and from others whose information was scarcely to be called exact. In this way, misleading traditions have become perpetuated, and are almost impossible to be destroyed.

CHAPTER X

The Life and Death of Mr. Badman

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF Mr. BADMAN is also in Bunyan's favourite style of a discourse between two friends, Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive. It is a method used to advantage by none other than Izaak Walton, a contemporary of Bunyan, in his *Compleat Angler*. Walton died in 1683, five years before Bunyan. Mr. Piscator and Venator and Auceps are of the same sort as Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive, excepting only that they discourse of things of this world, without any didactic or moral purpose. It is that essential purpose which makes *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, so unacceptable to the froward and perverse generation of to-day. It is too obviously "improving" literature; a tract. Of course it will be said, and justly, that nothing in the whole range of Bunyan's writings is other than that. But the adventures of Christian and Hopeful in *The Pilgrim's Progress* touch such heights of imagination and are set down with such grace and conviction that, although the moral purpose is there and the religious motive is obvious, they do not overweight the story. There is, in the conversation of Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive, so much interpretation and moralizing that the life of this very bad man is robbed of much of the interest it otherwise would have had.

For Mr. Badman was as bad as bad could be; and, if told in the manner of the journey of Christian and Hopeful, it might easily have ranked with that famous book. Lives of the wicked are apt to

be more interesting than those of the saints—human nature being what it is.

Badman's evil career began as a child. He robbed orchards. We suspect that to Bunyan the infantile evil course of robbing orchards was a very serious matter indeed, and an offence not easily to be condoned. But besides this (to modern minds) trivial matter, there was the worse propensity for lying. As a child he was such a liar that his parents never could tell when he was speaking the truth. "Yea, he would invent, tell and stand to, the lyes that he invented and told, and that with such an audacious face, that one might even read in his very countenance the symptoms of an hard and desperate heart this way."

Here was a budding novelist, or a youthful statesman, wasted, for sure !

These bad beginnings were a source of grief to his godly parents: "their hearts were much dejected at this beginning of their son; nor did there want counsel and correction from them to him, if that would have made him better. He wanted not to be told, in my hearing, and that over and over again, 'That all lyars should have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone'; and that whosoever loveth and maketh a lye should not have any part in the new and heavenly Jerusalem."

To this horrid narration, of Mr. Wiseman, Mr. Attentive replied, "Truly it was, as I said, a bad beginning, he served the devil betimes; yea, he became nurse to one of his brats, for a spirit of lying is the devil's brat."

Bunyan, having started young Badman on his evil career, proceeds to draw the character of an unmitigated scoundrel, one who has no redeeming features. It is a picture all grey, shading into black. Vice, in this instance, shows no glamour. Badman, placed as an apprentice with a friend of

his father, is lazy, robs his master, and runs away twice. A third time he runs ; and by this time his master has had too much of him and lets him go ; for his swearing and cursing and hatréd of the Sabbath were intolerable.

Here Bunyan interpolates a story of one Dorothy Mately, of Ashover, in Derbyshire, who like Badman was notoriously a great swearer and curser and liar. She was employed in the lead-mines of that district, in washing the rubbish that came from the pits. One day, washing the ore, she was taxed with having stolen twopence. Our author is very precise about it ; the day was March 23rd, 1660. The lad out of whose pocket she had taken the two pence accused her, but she violently denied the theft, " wishing that the ground might swallow her up, if she had them. She also used the same wicked words on several other occasions that day.

" Now one George Hodgkinson of Ashover, a man of good report there, came accidentally by where this Dorothy was, and stood still a while, to talk with her, as she was washing her ore ; there stood also a little child by her tub side, and another a distance from her, calling aloud to her to come away ; wherefore the said George took the girl by the hand, to lead her away to her that called her ; But behold, they had not gone above ten yards from Dorothy, but they heard her crying out for help ; so, looking back he saw the woman and her tub and sieve twisting round, and sinking into the ground. Then said the man, Pray to God to pardon thy sin, for thou art never like to be seen alive any longer. So she and her tub twirled round and round, till they sunk about three yards into the earth and then for a while staid. Then she called for help again, thinking, as she said, she should stay there. Now the man, though greatly amazed, did begin to think which way to help her,

but immediately a great stone, which appeared in the earth, fell upon her head, and broke her skull, and then the earth fell in upon her, and covered her. She was afterwards digged up and found about four yards within ground, with the boy's twopence in her pocket."

This story, which must have been common property in Bunyan's time, is on the face of it true; for a pure invention would not have been satisfied with killing the woman. A fiction—especially one with a moral to it—would not have stopped short of making Dorothy disappear altogether! However, the happening evidently was not in the seventeenth century thought, as the modern world would consider, to be an ordinary mining fatality, to be expected amid old diggings, but a direct interposition of Providence for the purpose of immediately punishing a liar and thief.

Such were the steadfast beliefs of Bunyan and his age.

Mr. Badman, after serving for a time with a new master as bad, set up in business for himself. No Providence interposed to strike him down in his sins. He long flourished, as the Scriptures allow the wicked shall do, like the green bay-tree. He flourished, that is to say, on the whole; for although his drinking and debauchery and his ill companions had brought his business pretty low, he married a rich girl, a godly virgin to whom he pretended to see the error of his ways. He "told her that he had found in his heart a great deal of love to her person, and that of all the damsels in the world he had pitched upon her, if she thought fit to make her his beloved wife. . . . I have got thus and thus much already, and feel money come in every day; but that is not the thing that I aim at; it is an honest and godly wife." Then he would present her with a good book or two, pretending how much good he had

got by them himself." So, says Bunyan, "the maid was catched."

It was a sad bargain for her. He rejoined his old evil companions, brought loose women into his home, squandered his wife's money and abused her. They had seven children. One was good and loved its mother dearly, three directly followed their father's sinful ways, and three "became a kind of mongrel professors not so bad as their father, nor so good as their mother, but were betwixt them both. They had their mother's notions, and their father's actions."

The good wife died, vainly beseeching Mr. Badman to reform; but that was not to be. He was compact of mean villainy, not that of the heroic sort; and abstained from the deepest sink of iniquity (which consisted in becoming an informer) because he was afraid of incurring odium among his neighbours. An informer in those times was an all too common figure. By laying a sworn information as to a breach of a law, these vile wretches earned a shameful living; subsisting upon half the penalties enforced, on a conviction. One of the offences of the times was infringing the Conventicle Acts, forbidding unlicensed preaching. Bunyan himself was a sufferer by these spies; and he did not forget them in his life of Mr. Badman; for in an interlude he makes Mr. Wiseman say, "In our town there was one W.S., a man of a very wicked life; and he, when there seemed to be countenance given to it, would needs turn informer. Well, so he did, and was as diligent in his business as most of them could be; he would watch of nights, climb trees, and range the woods of days, if possible to find out the meeters, for then they were forced to meet in the fields; yea, he would curse them bitterly, and swear most fearfully what he would do to them when he had found them."

This "W.S." was a real person as we have seen; the sexton of St. Cuthbert's, Bedford.

But see what happened to "W.S." "After he had gone on like a bedlam in his course a-while, and had done some mischiefs to the people, he was stricken by the hand of God, and that in this manner.

"1. Although he had his tongue naturally at will, he was taken with a faultering in his speech, and could not for weeks together speak otherwise than just like a man that was drunk.

"2. Then he was taken with a drauling or a slabbering at his mouth, which slabber sometimes would hang at his mouth, well nigh half way down to the ground.

"3. Then he had such a weakness in the back of his neck that ofttimes he could not look up before him, unless he clapped his hand hard upon his forehead, and hold up his head that way, by strength of hand.

"4. After this his speech went quite away, and he could speak no more than a swine or a bear. Therefore, like one of them, he would gruntle and make an ugly noise, according as he was offended or pleased, or would have any thing done.

"In this posture he continued for the space of half a year, or thereabouts, all the while otherwise well, and could go about his business, save once that he had a fall from the bell as it hangs in our steeple, which it was a wonder it did not kill him; But after that he also walked about, until God had made a sufficient spectacle of his judgment for his sin, and then on a sudden he was stricken and died miserably; and so there was an end of him and his doings."

Mr. Wiseman then told of the terrible fate of another of the same kidney who lived some four miles from St. Neots. Well, he sorely persecuted the "meeters"; and one day, while standing by

AN INFORMER AND A MEETING OF NONCONFORMISTS.
From *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman.*

the fireside, his favourite dog came and bit him in the leg. The bite turned to a gangrene, so that his flesh rotted off him and he died miserably. Thus it was to be an informer.

Mr. Badman was a finished and most accomplished hypocrite. "He would oftentimes please himself with the thoughts of what he could do in this matter, saying within himself, 'I can be religious, and irreligious; I can be anything, or nothing; I can swear, and speak against swearing; I can lie and speak against lying; I can wench, and be unclean, and defraud, and not be troubled for it; Now I enjoy myself, and am master of my own ways, and not they of me. This I have attained with much study, great care, and more pains.'"

Badman's sins were costly, but, says Bunyan, "he had an art to break, and to get money by hatfuls by breaking."

"When he had swaggered and whored away most of his wife's portion, he began to feel that he could not much longer stand upon his legs in this course of life, and keep up his trade and repute (such as he had) in the world, but by the new engine of breaking. Wherefore, upon a time, he gives a sudden rush into several men's debts to the value of about four or five thousand pounds, driving at the same time a very great trade, by selling many things for less than they cost him, to get him custom, therewith to blind his creditors' eyes. His creditors therefore, seeing that he had a great employ, and dreaming that it must needs at length turn to a very good account to them, trusted him freely, without mistrust, and so did others too, to the value of what was mentioned before. Well, when Mr. Badman had well feathered his nest with other men's goods and money, after a little time he breaks. And by and by it is noised about that Mr. Badman had shut up his

shop, and was gone, and could trade no longer. Now by that time his breaking had come to his creditors' ears, he had by craft and knavery made so sure of what he had that his creditors could not touch a penny. Well, when he had done, he sends his mournful sugared letters to his creditors, to let them understand what had happened, and desired them not to be severe with him; for he bore towards all men an honest mind, and would pay so far as he was able. Now, he sends his letters by a man confederate with him, who could make both the worst and best of Mr. Badman's case: The best for Mr. Badman, and the worst for his creditors; So when he comes to them, he both bemoans them, and condoles Mr. Badman's condition; telling of them that without a speedy bringing of things to a conclusion, Mr. Badman would be able to make them no satisfaction; but at present he both could and would, and that to the utmost of his power; and to that end he desired that they would come over to him. Well, his creditors appoint him a time and come over; and he meanwhile, authorises another to treat with them, but will not be seen himself, unless it was on a Sunday, lest they should snap him with a writ. So his deputed friend treats with them about their concern with Mr. Badman, first telling them of the great care that Mr. Badman took to satisfy them and all men for whatsoever he owed, as far as in him lay, and how little he thought a while since to be in this low condition. He pleaded also the greatness of his charge, the greatness of taxes, the badness of the times, and the great losses that he had by many of his customers, some of which died in his debt, others were run away and for many that were alive, he never expected a farthing from them. Yet, nevertheless, he would show him self an honest man, and would pay as far as he was able; and if they were

willing to come to terms, he would make a composition with them; for he was not able to pay them all. The creditors asked what he would give? It was replied: Half-a-crown in the pound. At this they began to huff, and he to renew his complaint and intreaty; but the creditors would not hear; and so for that time their meeting without success broke up. But after his creditors were in cold blood, and admitting second thoughts, and fearing lest delays should make them lose all, they admit of a second debate, come together again, and by many words and great ado, they obtained five shillings in the pound. So the money was produced, releases and discharges drawn, signed, and sealed, books crossed, and all things confirmed; and then Mr. Badman can put his head out a-doors again, and be a better man than when he shut up his shop, by several thousands of pounds."

Indeed, he "broke twice or thrice"; and always to his great advantage. At last his good wife died; and he married again, after a considerable interval; for, he was used to say, "Who would keep a cow of their own that can have a quart of milk for a penny?"

The woman he married was as bad as himself, and could match his abuse; giving him oath for oath, and curse for curse. Then, indeed, came a bad time for Mr. Badman. For sixteen years they lived thus; and by wasting his substance, she brought him so low that in the end "they parted as poor as howlets," having "brought their nobles to ninepence."

At last comes Mr. Badman to his end. It was a bad end, of course. "I cannot say properly," says Mr. Wiseman, "that he died of one disease, for there were many that had consented, and laid their heads together, to bring him to his end. He was dropsical, he was consumptive, was surfeited, was gouty, and as some say, he had a twang of the

foul distemper in his bowels. Yet the captain of all these men of death that came against him, to take him away, was the consumption."

He died quietly, "like a lamb," quite easy in his mind and impenitent. "His life was evil, his ways were evil, evil to his end. He therefore went to hell, and to the devil, how quietly soever he died."

No doubt the devil to whom Mr. Badman was assigned was a mean and odious devil; not an heroic and magnificent fiend like Apollyon, but an offensive shape of evil after the likeness of the devil who seized and made away with a man at Salisbury, as recounted by Mr. Wiseman, in this life of Badman. It appears that the man of Salisbury, "in the midst of his health, drinking and carousing in a tavern drank a health to the devil, saying, if the devil would not come and pledge him, he would not believe that there was either God or devil. Whereupon, his companions, stricken with fear, hastened out of the room; and presently, after hearing a hideous noise, and smelling a stinking savour, the vintner ran up into the chamber, and coming in, he missed his guest and found the window broken, the iron bar in it bowed, and all bloody; But the man was never heard of afterwards."

Such stories as these were in those times not hobgoblin yarns to frighten children; they were matters of implicit belief. There is no manner of doubt but that Bunyan believed in the literal truth of that story, and of others like it. The devil to him was a real person, as he was to most in that age.

To that terrific figure of wrath and of punishment unending therefore went Mr. Badman, serenely, as the good men should do.

CHAPTER XI

Bunyan as a Poet

BUNYAN is not commonly regarded as a poet, although the imaginative quality of true poetry is ever present in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. That he had read and appreciated Shakespeare is obvious from the pilgrims' hymn in the Second Part of that work :

Who would true valour see,
Let him come hither ;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather ;
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.

Whoso beset him round
With dismal stories,
Do but themselves confound ;
His strength the more is.
No lion can him affright,
He'll with a giant fight,
But he will have a right
To be a pilgrim.

Hogboblins nor foul fiend
Can daunt his spirit ;
He knows he at the end
Shall life inherit.
Then fancies fly away,
He'll fear not what men say ;
He'll labour night and day
To be a pilgrim.

This, clearly, is inspired by the song in *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene 5 ; and more particularly by the second verse :

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun.
—Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets.
Come hither, come hither, come hither.
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

But of course, the greater part of Bunyan's works is not read, save by curious students. Among them is one of verses "for boys and girls," called *Divine Emblems: or, Temporal Things Spiritualized.* In addressing the "Courteous Reader," in verse, the author proceeds:

The title-page will show, if thou wilt look,
What are the proper subjects of this book:
They're boys and girls of all sorts and degrees,
From those of age, to children on the knees.
Thus comprehensive am I in my notions,
They tempt me to it by their childish notions.
We now have boys with beards, and girls that be
Huge as old women, wanting gravity.

He seems here to be satirizing the levity of the times, as compared with the grave demeanours of the Cromwellian age. He seems almost apologetic for the simple homeliness of his rhymes, mostly rhymed complets; for, says he:

I could, were I so pleased, use higher strains,
And, for applause, on tenters stretch my brains,

but concludes that were he to shoot too high he well might miss his mark. But, truly, in these simple rhymes he discovers himself to us as a man observant of, and delighting in, simple rustic things; a shrewd observer, of a pleasant fancy in this unexpected realm of poesy. It is poetry of a kind we discover in Quarles' *Emblems*; it is compact of those quaint fantasies which the Eliza-

bethan termed "conceits." There is to each poem, of course, the "Comparison," otherwise, the moral lesson; Bunyan never set pen to paper other than as a moralist. But the moral he draws is usually as interesting as the story; and it displays ever his sincere piety.

The *Divine Emblems* was frequently reprinted;

THE BEGGAR.
From *Divine Emblems.*

and a very neat little reissue, by W. Johnston of Ludgate Hill, in 1767, is embellished with quaint woodcuts that have an appeal all their own.

From the religious point of view the emblem upon the beggar is perhaps the best:

He wants, he asks, he pleads his poverty.
They within doors do him an alms deny.
He doth repeat and aggravate his grief;
But they repulse him, give him no relief.
He begs; they say "Begone!" he will not hear,
He coughs and sighs, to show he still is there;
They disregard him, he repeats his groans;
They still say "Nay," and he himself bemoans.
They call him "Vagrant," and more rugged grow;
He cries the shriller; trumpets out his woe.
At last, when they perceive he'll take no nay,
An alms they give him, without more delay.

COMPARISON

The beggar doth resemble them that pray
To God for mercy, and will take no nay ;
But wait, and count that all His hard gainsays
Are nothing else but fatherly delays ;
Then imitate him, praying souls, and cry,
There's nothing like to importunity.

He has verses on the flint in the water ; how it shall ever remain a flint ; upon the barren fig-tree ; on the whipping of a top ; on the rising and the going down of the sun ; and many another ; each with its appropriate moral. But the verses on an egg are as good as any :

MEDITATIONS UPON AN EGG.

The egg's no chick by falling from a hen,
Nor man's a Christian till he's born again ;
The egg's at first contained in the shell
Men afore grace in sin and darkness dwell ;
The egg, when laid, by warmth is made a chicken,
And Christ by grace the dead in sin doth quicken ;
The egg when first a chick the shell's its prison,
So flesh to soul who yet with Christ is risen.
The chick at first is in the shell confined
So heaven-born souls are in the flesh detain'd
The shell doth crack, the chick doth chirp and peep,
The flesh decays, and then men pray and weep.
The shell doth break, the chick's at liberty,
The flesh falls off, the soul doth mount on high.
But both do not enjoy the self-same plight ;
The soul is safe, the chick now fears the kite.
But chicks do not from rotten eggs proceed ;
Nor is a hypocrite a saint indeed.
The rotten egg, though underneath the hen,
If crack'd, stinks, and is loathsome unto men.
Nor doth her warmth make what is rotten, sound ;
What's rotten, rotten will at last be found.
The hypocrite, sin has him in possession,
He is a rotten egg, under profession.

Some eggs bring cockatrices ; and some men ;
Some hatch'd and brooded in the viper's den.
Some eggs bring wild-fowls, and some men there be
As wild as are the wildest fowls that flee.

Some eggs bring spiders ; and some men appear
More venom'd than the worst of spiders are.
Some eggs bring pismires ; and some seem to me
As much for trifles as the pismires be.
And thus do divers eggs from diff'rent shapes,
As like some men as monkeys are like apes,
But this is but an egg, were it a chick,
Here had been legs, and wings, and bones to pick.

The " pismire " is, it may be well to explain, the old English name for the ant, to whom that

THE CHICKEN.
From *Divine Emblems.*

other, and later, moralist, Dr. Watts, bids us go, if we would witness industry. The ant has a strong flavour of uric acid ; hence its olden name.

Bunyan's verse on the swallow has no " Comparison," or moral attached. His lines show how keenly he appreciated her grace ; but I think he was wrong in thinking she sings :

ON A SWALLOW

This pretty bird ! Oh, how she flies and sings ;
But could she do so if she had not wings ?
Her wings bespeake my faith, her songs my peace ;
When I believe and sing, my doubtings cease.

Bunyan's homely wit and apt comparison in these *Divine Emblems* are full of resource, and unfailing. He never soars to great heights; not perhaps because he cannot, but for the most excellent of reasons, that such flights could not have been appreciated by the audience to whom these verses are especially addressed.

What could be more admirable, in its own particular way, than these "Meditations upon a Candle?":

A man's like a candle in a candlestick,
Made up of tallow and a little wick;
For what the candle is, before 'tis lighted,
Just such be they who are in sin benighted.
Nor can a man his soul with grace inspire,
More than the candles set themselves on fire.
Candles receive their light from what they are not;
Men grace from Him, for whom at first they care not.
We manage candles when they take the fire;
God men, when He with grace doth them inspire.

And biggest candles give the better light,
As grace on biggest sinners shines most bright.
The candle shines to make another see,
A saint unto his neighbours light should be.
The blinking candle needs much despise,
Saints dim of light are high in no man's eyes.

Again, though it may seem to some a riddle,
We use to light our candles at the middle;
True light doth on a candle's end appear,
And grace the heart first reaches by the ear;
But 'tis the wick the fire doth kindle on,
And 'tis the heart that grace first works upon.
Thus both to fasten upon what's the main,
And so their life and vigour do maintain.

The tallow makes the wick yield to the fire,
And sinful flesh doth make the soul desire
That grace may kindle on it, in it burn;
So evil makes the soul from evil turn.

But candles in the wind are apt to flare,
And Christians in a tempest to despair.
We see the flame with smoke attended is ;
And in our holy lives there's much amiss.

Sometimes a thief will candle-light annoy ;
And lusts do seek our graces to destroy.
What brackish is, will make a candle sputter ;
'Twixt sin and grace there's oft a heavy clutter.
Sometimes the light burns dim, 'cause of the snuff,
And sometimes 'tis blown quite out with a puff.
But watchfulness preventeth both these evils,
Keeps candles light, and grace in spite of devils.

But let not snuffs nor puffs make us to doubt ;
Our candles may be lighted, though puff'd out,
The candle in the night doth all excel ;
Nor sun, nor moon, nor stars then shine so well ;
So is the Christian, in our hemisphere,
Whose light shows others how their course to steer.
When candles are put out, all's in confusion ;
Where Christians are not, devils make intrusion.
They then are happy who such candles have,
All others dwell in darkness and the grave.
But candles that do blink within the socket,
And saints whose eyes are always in their pocket,
Are much alike ; such candles make us fumble ;
And at such saints, good men and bad do stumble.

Good candles don't offend, except sore eyes,
Nor hurt, unless it be the silly flies ;
Thus none like burning candles in the night,
Nor ought to holy living for delight.
But let us draw towards the candle's end ;
The fire, you see, doth wick and tallow spend ;
As grace man's life, until his glass is run,
And so the candle and the man is done.

The man now lays him down upon his bed ;
The wick yields up its fire ; and so is dead.
The candle now extinct is, but the man
By grace mounts up to glory, there to stand.

This is the largest effort in this little book. The candle ever has been, in all the range of literature, from the Bible to Shakespeare and our own time, an object from which to draw parallels and similitudes ; and it is not to be supposed that Bunyan, in his homespun verses, would neglect it. His verses must have gone right home to the peasants of his own and later times, every evening, when they lighted their primitive illuminants.

One other example of these emblems ; that on " The Flint in the Water."

This flint, time out of mind, has here abode,
Where crystal streams make their continual road ;
Yet it abides a flint as much as 'twere,
Before it touched the water, or came there.

Its hardness is not in the least abated,
'Tis not at all by water penetrated.
Though water hath a soft'ning virtue in't,
It can't dissolve the stone, for 'tis a flint.

Yea, though in the water it doth still remain,
Its fiery nature still it does retain.
If you oppose it with its opposite,
Then in your very face its fire 'twill spit.

From this simple natural philosophy in which Bunyan clearly delighted, he draws this " Comparison " :

The flint an emblem is of those that lie
Under the Word, like stones, until they die.
Its crystal streams have not their natures changed,
They are not from their lusts by grace estranged.

CHAPTER XII

The Village of Elstow

ELSTOW, the birthplace of John Bunyan and for centuries the home of his race, is yet but a small village, though so near Bedford. It remains rural, although of late years factories and other southerly extensions of the county town seem to indicate that the ancient rustic state of Elstow will in the near future become largely qualified. Railway bridges and widened roads already herald these inevitable changes.

As "Elnestou" we find it in Domesday Book. The name is a debased form of "Helenstow"; that is, "Helen's Place." Presumably the name is derived from the dedication of a very early church to the sainted Helena, mother of the British-born Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great, the first Christian ruler of that Empire. St. Helena, "inventor," or discoverer, of the remains of the Cross at Jerusalem, is greatly honoured in several places in England; St. Helen's in Lancashire being (perhaps rather surprisingly to most people, looking upon that industrial town of chemical works with some disfavour) one of them. The name of Helenstowe has, in common with those other names beginning with the letter H, suffered much. It has been written "Elnestowe," "Alnestowe," and even "Aunestowe."

As we enter the village, from Bedford, the cottage in which Bunyan lived from his marriage is seen on the right. Opposite is a building which once was an inn, and before that, by tradition, a

hostel associated with the Abbey. The birthplace of many earlier Bunyans for many generations and their few acres of land were away to the left of the village street, at Bunyan's End, Harrowden, in the meadows by Cardington Brook.

Behind Elstow Street, on the right, or west side, still stretches the widespreading Elstow Green, with the ancient Moot Hall on it, and the remains of the village cross.

In the craze for " Village Signs " resulting from

THE MOOT HALL, ELSTOW.

a suggestion by Prince Albert, Duke of York, at the Royal Academy banquet in 1920, many designs for such were exhibited ; among them one for a double-sided sign for Elstow. This, resembling in shape a typical village inn-sign on a post, showed Christian, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, carrying his burden, and was crested with a device portraying the fight between Christian and Apollyon. This remains only as a design, for it never has been put into execution.

Elstow church stands, impressive, on the south side of the Green, with its massive belfry-tower detached. It was the Abbey Church, and at the dissolution of that religious house lost some 53 feet

✠ Orate pro Anima dom
Anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo
Cuius Anime et Omnium Fidelium defunctorum de
Elstow Abbatisse que obiit
Sexto quorum

BRASS TO ELIZABETH HARVEY, ABBESS OF ELSTOW.

at its eastern end. Thus the original chancel, which ended in an apse, has disappeared, together with the Lady Chapel, which was a continuation of it.

This large and interesting church of Elstow, now and for long past parochial, was originally the Abbey Church of the Benedictine Convent of Our Lady and the Holy Trinity, established so long ago as the eleventh century. The foundress of this nunnery was the Countess Judith, widow of the Saxon Waltheof, Earl of Northampton. This lady was no less a personage than a niece of William the Conqueror. Waltheof had been executed at Winchester.

Judith's religious house grew, like most of the others, by gifts and bequests of land, until it became very wealthy. It was, and remained, aristocratic. To it belonged the manor of Elstow and the manorial rights in the great four-days' fair long held on the village green.

The Abbess of this house was a rich and exclusive person. She had a house of her own within the convent. Something of what was the state of an Abbess of Elstow may be judged from a very fine monumental brass to one of them, yet remaining in the church. This is that to Elizabeth Harvey, who died in 1524, and therefore was very late in the long line of Abbesses. Indeed there were but three others after her. There is no finer brass to a Benedictine Abbess. She is represented in her full robes, and with her pastoral staff. The brass was in Puritan times somewhat defaced: the pious inscriptions torn off and the head of the pastoral staff cut out. As often was the case, this brass was made in the lifetime of the Abbess, a blank space being left for the date of her decease afterwards to be inserted. These dates never were added.

Most of the nuns here were ladies of county

family degree. By such accounts as have survived, they appear to have not infrequently been as much this-worldly as other-worldly. So early as 1270, one of the nuns evidently had got into some sort of trouble. What it was that caused all the bother, we never shall know, because those who took disciplinary measures took also very good care to hush up the details. For Agatha Giffard, the lady in question, was exceptionally well-connected. One brother, Walter Giffard, was Archbishop of York, and another, Godfrey, Bishop of Worcester. Thus it was that Richard Gravesend, Bishop of Lincoln, in whose diocese this part of the country then was included, and who was in authority over religious houses within his jurisdiction, could write: "We are anxious from our inmost heart concerning a misfortune which has occurred in the Abbey of Elvestowe and grief of this kind affects us the more bitterly from our pious compassion, because that from that house, more frequently than from any other, false reports of disgraceful acts are brought to us. And although in this, by the persuasions of certain people, we were somewhat impressed against the Abbess and your sister, who through connivance or remissness were said to be in fault, yet in consideration of yourself, and the venerable father, your brother, we are through affection specially jealous of the honour of your family, we will take care, so far as we can, in accordance with the laws of God, and the usages of propriety, and without secular scandal, to correct the fault which has been committed, with all secrecy and to visible sores to apply a hidden medicine. Wherefore, if so please you, let not the occurrence of the aforenamed misfortune further greatly trouble your mind."

Excellent, discreet Bishop! And in the fullness of time, Agatha Giffard, who remained within this community, became Prioress.

ELSTOW ABBEY CHURCH.

These ladies, for generation to generation, seem to have held far more liberal views than generally were current as to a fitting conduct for members of a convent; and in 1530 Bishop Longland of Lincoln severely reproved the nuns for unseemly dress and conduct. They had converted the Abbey almost into the likeness of a secular country house ruled by bachelor girls; we will not say "old maids," because the vanities of fashion seem to have been well studied and followed. One of the things for which the Bishop reproved them was that, contrary to the Benedictine rule, they no longer took meals in the monastic common-room, but resorted to the "Households," which was an apartment where lay visitors from the outside world were met. This, observed the indignant Bishop, was a "resort of seculars, both men, women and children"; and the practice must be discontinued. Also there had been much laxity in the religious services; and in future no lady was to linger in the cloisters later than half-past seven at night; nor was any man, priest or other, to come into the "Misericorde," or conventual parlour, without special licence from the Lady Abbess; nor to remain there long; and while there it was to be seen they were of honest conversation. And again, all outside doors were to be kept shut.

The Lady Abbess, thus admonished, was Katharine Wyngate. She personally was enjoined to rise at eight, as was proper, to attend Matins, and with her sisterhood. "Over this," continued the Bishop, "we ordain and by way of injunction command, under pain of disobedience, from henceforth, that no lady nor any religious sister within the said monastery presume to wear their apparels upon their heads under such lay fashion as they have now of late done, with cornered crests, neither under such manner of height showing their

foreheads, more like lay people than religious, but that they use them without such crests or secular fashions, and of a lower sort, and that their veil come as low as their eyelids, and so continually to use the same, unless it be at such times as they shall be occupied in any handicraft labour, at which times it shall be lawful for them to turn up the said veil for the time of such occupation.

"And under like pains we enjoin that none of the said religious sisters do use or wear any such voided shoes as they have of late been used, but that they be of such honest fashion as other religious places both use, and that their gowns and kirtles be close afore, and not deeply voided at the breast, and no more to use red stomachers, but the sadder colours in the same."

So we see that worldly fashions were honoured in the cloister, and that the sisters were somewhat *décolleté*. It is no wonder the neighbourhood gossipped.

Elizabeth Boyville, or Bayfield, was Abbess in this year. She was the last. In 1539, the Abbey was surrendered to the King, in common with other monasteries. The Abbess and her nuns were sent forth into the world. Were they grieved at it? It should not seem so, seeing how sib to that outside world they were. The Abbess received as pension £50; Ellen Snow, the Prioress, had £4 per annum; Anne Wake, lately Prioress, had £3 6s. 8d. One, Cecilie Starkey, had the like amount; and the remaining twenty nuns took from £2 to £2 13s. 4d.

To Sir Humphrey Ratcliffe was granted the Abbey, in 1553, and in a mansion he built called the "Abbey House," he lived until 1566, when he died.

The next owners of the Abbey estate were the Hillersdons, who in the reign of Charles the First, built the stately Renaissance mansion whose ruins

stand on the south side of the church, on the site of the Abbey domestic buildings. Whether or no it be true that Inigo Jones was the architect is not capable of proof; to that versatile and distinguished man almost every architectural work of merit in that era is ascribed. The Hillersdons

THE CHAPTER HOUSE, ELSTOW ABBEY CHURCH.

disappeared in the next century, and in 1792 the property was bought by Samuel Whitbread.

The church is wholly of the Norman and Early English periods. It would seem that it was the intention in that last-named period to rebuilt the Abbey Church in an ornate style, in great contrast with the plain Norman structure, but beyond reconstructing the west front and two western bays of the nave, nothing more was done. The religious life of this Benedictine house suffered, as we have seen, in favour of its social amenities, and

the architectural improvements appear to have been abandoned from very much the same cause. When a new roof was in the fifteenth century found necessary, it was built as we can see, rather clumsily, as a matter of necessity, and not as an embellishment or improvement. The east end, shortened, as we have said, is curiously plain ; a post-Reformation work with three windows of Perpendicular date built into it, and in an odd position on the east wall, above the altar is a monument to the first lay owner of Elstow, Sir Humphrey Ratcliffe, and his wife.

An exceptional building, an annexe of the church on its south-western side, is thought to have been the Chapter House. It is a low, square room of Decorated character, vaulted from a central shaft of Purbeck marble, of unusual eight-sided convex shape. This Chapter House is reached down four steps, from the south aisle, and is very dark. Of late years this interesting and unusual type of building for a chapter-house has been put to use as a vestry. The dark and gloomy character of it is qualified by an electric-lighting installation, and a stone fireplace of generous scale, apparently a modern addition, renders it available in the coldest weather. Indeed, recollections of this strange Chapter House, at the Christmas season, with its electric glow-lamps lighted, and a blazing fire roaring in the capacious fireplace bring up to the memory as charming and romantic a picture as well may be imagined.

The font at which Bunyan was baptized as an infant has been replaced by another, and the old one is built within a recess in the west wall of the north aisle. Two Bunyan memorial windows, of no very outstanding merit, have been added.

For long distances across the level plain the massive tower of Elstow Church can be seen. Close at hand, it looks even more imposing, for

the simple reason that unlike most village churches, it stands apart, across the widespreading green, and thus can be seen at a proper distance, disclosing its true scale and dignity of age. The village itself is singularly quiet, when we consider its proximity to Bedford town.

CHAPTER XIII

Bedford town—The Castle—Sir William Harpur and his school—The Civil War and the Dissenting church—The Bunyan Chapel: the "Old Meeting"

BEDFORD, far larger than the 40,000 or so of its population would seem to warrant, is bustling and cheerful nowadays, with something of a stately appearance, due largely to the broad and swiftly-flowing river Ouse, which you cross in coming into the town from the south. Viewed from the bridge, the terrace-walk by the riverside gives it that air of stateliness—or at the least of it, a look of interest—which a river almost always confers.

There was once a castle here, by the banks of Ouse. The prehistoric mound on which it stood is still in existence; you may see it at the back of the Castle Brewery and the "Swan" Hotel, but of its keep, its inner and outer baileys, its barbican, nothing at all is left, not even one stone set upon another. The site is just a mound, some fifteen feet high; its banks planted with trees, and the flat top of it a bowling-green.

It was a very long time ago that this castle disappeared off the face of the earth; so long since as 1224. It already had experienced a long and stirring history, in its growth from a primitive, palisaded mound, to be a Norman fortress of stout masonry walls. Those who first raised that mound had exactly the same purpose as the later builders of the stone castle; to defend the ford across the river, which preceded the bridge. We hear first, in dim, remote times, in the *Saxon Chronicle* of A.D. 571, of the Saxon chieftain, Cuthwulf, fighting

here with the Bretwalas (the British-Welsh). The chronicle calls it " Bedcanforda," or " Bedican forda." That was the name the invading Saxons called it by ; what it was named by the British is not known.

Thus came into existence the name of " Bedford." What, then, does that name mean ? The learned antiquary, Camden, in his great work, *Britannia*, proves himself in this instance not to be so learned as usual. In fact, the " learning " of his time, in the matter of place-names at least, was merely guess work, sometimes inspired, but more usually grotesquely wide of the mark. In giving his explanation of the name " Bedford," he perpetrates such a " howler " as no schoolboy in these times could make. He knew, unfortunately, nothing of the *Saxon Chronicle* ; and so he said the name " implies beds and inns at a ford." Well, literally, so it does, but not in the study of place-names. It indicates no such ancient hospitality to travellers, even though the " Swan " Hotel, the successor of olden inns, stands thereby, at the head of the ford.

If we give " Bedīkanford " that spelling—with the long " i," and the hard " c "—it will be immediately revealed that this was to the battling Saxons the " bedyked ford " ; that is, the ford of the river that had been ditched or dyked ; otherwise, fortified, against them.

This ancient Bedford, for centuries after that knew much fighting. In later Saxon times, when most of East Anglia was under Danish rule, Bedford was in the marchlands between Saxons and Danes. Those invading Danes, long a terror, attacked it in A.D. 921, up the Ouse from Tempsford, where they lay in considerable strength, but were driven back, with great loss. Another attack was delivered in 1010, and with more success. After the Norman conquest, Bedford was a lordship given to Payne de Beauchamp,

who, it is thought, built on the ancient mound the first castle. Castles attract enemies; and this fortress was no exception to that rule. It was besieged by King Stephen, in his civil warfare against Matilda; and seems to have suffered and not to have been effectually repaired, for in 1216, when William de Beauchamp held it for the Barons, against King John, it soon was surrendered on the summons of Fulke de Breauté. This de Breauté did well for himself, for his master conferred the forfeited lordship of Bedford upon him. Wise in his generation, the new lord immediately set to work to rebuild the castle, and to make it stronger than ever. He was a ruthless personage: pulling down the collegiate church of St. Paul and using the stones of it in his embattled buildings. He was, in short, nothing less than a robber baron. In 1217 he had a dispute with the monks of Warden Abbey, about the ownership of a wood. His way of settling that controversy was to kidnap thirty of the monks, and imprison them in his dungeons at Bedford. But this was too much for even such a man to be permitted to do. The Church was too powerful for that; and Fulke was obliged to release the monks and to do penance in Warden Abbey. Also, which was more to the point, he did not secure possession of the wood.

But we find him still, in 1224, carrying on, after his way. The justices on assize at Dunstable, having given thirty verdicts against him, and fined him £100 in respect of each, he, helped by his brother, seized the three judges. Two escaped, but the third, Henry de Braibrook, found a lodging in a prison-cell at Bedford Castle.

The King, Henry the Third, was furious at this outrage, and went with a strong force from Northampton to Bedford, where he arrived on June 22nd. The Castle stubbornly held out until

August 14th. It was a determined affair, both on the part of defenders and besiegers; and the fortress was taken only after four assaults, and by degrees. First the attackers gained the barbican; and then in succession the outer and inner baileys, and finally the keep. Fulke himself was not in the castle when it was taken; fortunately for himself. His brother, and all who thus were found in arms against the King, were hanged; and this troublesome place was ordered to be utterly destroyed. These orders were duly carried out. Never again was Bedford a fortified place; and fortunately so, for during the Civil War between Charles the First and the Parliament, the town was one of those that were allowed to be at peace, since the possession of it was of no military advantage to either side. The people of Bedford, too, were wholly indifferent to the fortunes of the contending parties, if only they might be let alone.

A great deal of the eminently prosperous condition of Bedford is due to that great local benefactor, Sir William Harpur, who was a native of the town, born in 1496. Proceeding to London, he became a wealthy citizen and member of the Merchant Taylors Company. He was knighted, as Lord Mayor of London, in 1561. Five years later, he gave property in St. Andrew's, Holborn, for the endowment of schools in this, his native town. The greatly enhanced value of this property now provides an income of over £25,000. Hence the educational facilities of Bedford are exceptional.

This great expansion of income was not, nor could have been, foreseen; and thus curious results in course of time accrued, following the terms of Sir William Harpur's gift. Under a charter of Edward the Sixth, the old Corporation of Bedford were empowered to build a school and to receive lands for its endowment. No steps had been taken in this matter before Harpur had

turned his benevolent eye upon it. His charter made provision for any "resydue or superfluytye" left after the school was established to be expended in alms to the poor of the town. In this way, when the "superfluity" grew, the alms-giving in Bedford was on a scale altogether unprecedented.

The old, unreformed Corporation of Bedford had a reputation all over the country—not only all over the county—for its feastings. This survives to us in Goldsmith's play, *She Stoops to Conquer*, in which, when Hardcastle brings Marlowe the bill of fare, Marlowe exclaims: "What's here? For the first course for the second course; for the dessert? The devil, sir. Do you think we have brought down the whole Joiners' Company, or the Corporation of Bedford to eat such a supper?"

Sir William Harpur and his second wife, Margaret, lie in the south aisle of St. Paul's Church, at the east end, where memorial brasses to them will be found. Sir William is shown as clean-shaven, and wearing armour—unusual features for that period, when City knights generally are found on their monumental brasses to be bearded and are wearing merchants' robes. On the north wall in 1768 the Corporation set up a tablet to Sir William and Dame Alice his first wife, with portraits, of rather a traditional character.

We know nothing of Sir William Harpur's attitude towards the religious troubles and changes of his time; nor does much emerge respecting the views of Bedford's people in those matters until that time when Puritan views were in general manifesting themselves in the country. Then, however, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Hertfordshire, and Cambridgeshire took a leading part. The nobility and the squires were, as well may be supposed, almost to a man for the Church of England and for King Charles, who, as the High Churchmen then and now like to think, died for it;

hence we hear so much of the "Royal Martyr." During the Civil War, these highly placed personages were somewhat under a cloud, for Bedfordshire was one of the Associated Counties which supplied so many soldiers for the Parliament's forces.

Even before the outbreak of that lamentable war, the people of Bedfordshire, to the number of two thousand, had made their views upon religious affairs known in Parliament; and in 1641 they sent up to the House a petition praying for the reform of what were regarded as popish practices to be undertaken. But what these reforms were to be, none could decide, for every shade of opinion was active. The Romanizing Archbishop Laud had already persecuted and caused to be ejected from their livings many clergy who would not conform to his views; and now the opposite parties were urging that Archbishops themselves, and Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, and all the hierarchy of the Church of England should be abolished. A large body of opinion favoured a form of Presbyterianism. As time went on, and the Civil War broke out, the High Church parsons suffered as had the others. They were sequestered, and clerics of views more agreeable to the authorities took their places. With the Restoration, of course, in 1660, another reversal followed. Meanwhile, it was proposed to abolish the Church of England and to take away its endowments and apply them to State uses. Many, however, who might have been for disestablishing the Church, took some alarm at the proposal to take its properties. There are, indeed, many in our own time who willingly would see the Church of England disestablished, but would not be for its disendowment. For if you take away the properties of any institution, how long will private property be safe? And in any case, who would be for endowing

the State, that worst of prodigals and spendthrifts with unlimited funds?

It would entail too lengthy an enquiry to follow all the varying fortunes of the contending parties in these affairs of ecclesiastical polity, of religion, and of conscience. That age was suffering from the tenderness of the Elizabethan statesmen towards the Anglicans. They should then and there have wholly made away with any State privilege or recognition of any especial form of belief. The time was past for the clergy to hold any real spiritual authority. Men could read and write. They thought. And they rightly resented any body of Christians arrogating to themselves alone the title. "the Church." That is why Bunyan, for one, wrote and spoke of churches as "steeple-houses."

A "Church" is thus not a building, nor any one religious body holding an exclusive right to that title. It pleases those of the Church of England to style that "the Church," and those who are not of it "the denominations." I myself, who write this, heard a Bishop of the Church of England, at a public gathering—public, but consisting of people in sympathy with the Establishment, say, of other religious bodies, "We call them the denominations—the, er, the names." It was said with an accent of dismissing all other kinds of beliefs with an amused contempt. And the Bishop looked round for approval; and, his audience being what it was, he received it. Had this delightful Right Reverend Father in God lived in Bunyan's time, he would have thought the same, but he would not have been mildly amused. He would have been savagely bitter, and he would have styled those who differed from him "sectaries" and "fanatics." Writing of them, in the quaint spelling of the times, they would have been "phanatiques." Their places of worship would have been "conventicles."

There were many who in those years, 1641 to 1650, would have made away with the Established Church, and substituted for it a National Assembly at Westminster, and a Provincial Assembly, on Presbyterian lines, these holding authority over congregations. But it was seen that this would be only an Episcopacy under another name. In this way, said the Puritan rector of Yielden, the Rev. William Dell, "the Church would swarm with other lords, and Christ's own kingdom would never be suffered to return to Christ's own lordship and dominion." No clergy, no laity; that was the ideal. This was and is the true Christian spirit. "All Churches are equal, as well as all Christians, all being sisters of one another, beams of one sun, branches of one vine, streams of one fountain, members of one body, branches of one golden candlestick, and so equal in all things."

William Dell, in these opinions, widely disseminated in Bedfordshire and the neighbouring regions, was thus spiritually the founder of the Congregational Church in Bedford. One Benjamin Coxe, was actually the founder of the first Congregational body in Bedford in 1643–4. That lapsed with his departure for London and elsewhere; but it was re-founded in 1650, and since then has had a continuous, unbroken history, down to our own time. The Acts of this nonconforming Church in Bedford have been preserved and are prefixed by an historical sketch of the founding of this body. Early in its ministry was a man remarkable even in those strange times. He was founder of that Church, and remained, until his death in 1655, its pastor, when he was succeeded by John Burton.

The story of William Gifford is a moving and almost incredible narrative. He had experienced a change of heart as strange as it was complete; he was a major in the King's army, and a typical, roystering

Cavalier, and bore a part in a last desperate venture for the King in May, 1648, in Kent. Their last fight, in which they were utterly defeated, was at Maidstone. There Gifford was, among others, taken prisoner, and was condemned to die. The night before the day appointed for the execution, his sister came to pay him farewell, and noticed that the guard were all intoxicated. Telling him, he crawled out of his prison and escaped ; coming by slow and devious ways to Bedford, where he set up as a doctor. He was a hard drinker, swearer, and gamester—and an unlucky gamester too. He always lost. In one of the fits of depression following upon these evil courses, he chanced to read a godly book. It took a hold upon him ; and he became a changed man. He sought the company, not of his old, bad companions, but that of the Christian few who were left after the first founding of the Church. They at first repelled him ; they did not believe in the honesty of this change. But he would not take a " nay," and thrust himself again and again upon their company. At length, after much prayer and searching of hearts, a little band of brethren and sisters formed themselves into a religious community, and chose Gifford for their pastor. They were of the apostolic number of twelve. This was, of course, in the Commonwealth period. In 1653 Gifford was presented by the Mayor and Corporation of Bedford, at that time of Puritan sympathies, with the living of St. John the Baptist, in the stead of the rector who for some reason had been sequestered ; and as rector Gifford remained until his death only two years later. We have here the strange and anomalous spectacle of a Congregational pastor being presented with, and accepting, a parish-church living. But in these Commonwealth years there was a Broad Church policy, by which any form of Christian religion

(other than Roman Catholic) might be practised in churches. The deciding factor was the owner of the living, who could present, if he chose, Independent, Congregationalist, Baptist, or what not profession. This was religious liberty indeed.

It was in this year, 1653, that Bunyan joined

COMMUNION CUP,
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, BEDFORD.

the nonconforming Church in Bedford. He had Gifford for his counsellor, who had shown him "Yonder shining light." Gifford figures in *The Pilgrim's Progress* as "the Interpreter" and "Evangelist."

St. John's Church is on the south side of Bedford bridge, some little distance down on the Ampthill

and Elstow roads. It was founded, together with the almshouses for which it served as a chapel, by Robert de Paris about 1189. The almshouses adjoined. The church was rebuilt in the fourteenth century, and was restored in 1872. Near by is the railway-station of Bedford St. John's. Among the Communion plate of St. John's Church is the silver cup, dated 1576, which was used in that interregnum, as it is now, for the wine of that Sacrament. William Gifford and his congregation used it, and we can have no doubt but that John Bunyan here, from this vessel, partook of that rite on his admission to their meeting.

At the Restoration, which, with the restoration of the monarchy, brought back also the State Church, the Establishment, the Church of England, St. John's could no longer be held by any dissenting minister. Gifford had been followed by John Burton, who died in 1660, some months after the King had been restored. The Dissenting Church thus lost its place of worship, and all dissenters lost their liberty of thought. It is curious to consider that, had State affairs been of another complexion; had the Commonwealth continued but a little longer, Bunyan, who succeeded Burton as pastor, would have been as a matter of course, presented to this living of St. John's; and would thus have been to us that astonishing thing, a Nonconformist rector.

Their place of meeting thus taken away, the brethren met for a time for worship in each others' houses, and in the farmhouses round about; and not infrequently in secluded places in the woods; for no more than five months had passed after the Restoration than their form of worship became by Act of Parliament illegal, and themselves subject to arrest and imprisonment. When that time of stress was followed by an interlude of quiet, the brethren purchased, in 1672, Ruffhead's Barn

"for a meeting-place." That barn was taken down in 1707, and a chapel was built on its site. This in its turn, was demolished in 1849 and the present Union Chapel, "Old Meeting," or Bunyan's Chapel, was built in its stead.

The stranger in Bedfordshire and in the town is always assured by whomsoever he meets that the name and fame of John Bunyan are deeply impressed to this day upon all Bedford and Bedfordshire people. That is doubtless true, and therefore my own experiences, quaint enough, to be sure, do not shadow forth that real condition of affairs. The town of Bedford in these our times is, like every other town, modernized. Its interests, as a town of more than 40,000 inhabitants, are very wide; and no one phase of religious thought or belief can any longer dominate it. Indeed, this fine, prosperous, and pleasant-looking town beside the broad river Ouse gives one the impression of being far more intensely concerned with the material things of this life than in those of that which is to come. It is not singular in this secularizing twentieth century; only here it seems exceptionally noticeable, even though the central feature of the town which you must needs see in passing through it, along that main road, the High Street, is the chief and very large parish church of Bedford, St. Paul's; so unusually noticeable because, mid-way along the High Street there is an open market-space, in which it stands. There, in contemplative attitude, is a bronze statue of John Howard, the great prison reformer of the eighteenth century. It is a fine work, by Alfred Gilbert, set up to celebrate the centenary of his death in 1790, and is in striking contrast with the marble statue in St. Paul's Cathedral, by Bacon, in which he is shown in a costume that assuredly he never wore; that of an ancient Greek, or Roman. This Bedford statue exhibits

the philanthropist really in his habit as he lived. It is a very fine work indeed. There he stands with tricorner hat on his head, a travelling, wide-skirted coat, and top-boots ; just as he was wont to make his journeys.

But to resume our discourse as to modern Bedford and its old Bunyan interests. The town in which that great religious force moved and lived was a town of not much more than one thousand inhabitants. It has increased forty-fold since his day. The old streets still run along the same lines ; the old parish churches are, for the most part, still there ; but where are the old houses of that age ? Nearly all are gone. Even the house where Bunyan himself lived, in St. Cuthbert's, has disappeared, and so also has the original Meeting House, and even the one that succeeded it. The present is the third, and was built in 1849 ; that terrible period for architecture.

When last in Bedford, I enquired the way to the Bunyan Chapel, not that I lacked that information, but from curiosity to find what would be the answers. The first was the inevitable, " Sorry, but I'm a stranger." One has always that experience. A shop-girl in the High Street, hesitated and fumbled so long about it that her complete ignorance was quite evident. A policeman was rather at a nonplus, too ; but surmised it was in Mill Street. He was right. It is there. No booksellers' or stationers' shop-windows exhibited anything of a Bunyan interest ; but there were some that displayed improper picture-postcards. These, however, were in the sly side-streets. I regarded them with disfavour, and passed on.

On the right-hand side in Mill Street there is indeed the Bunyan Chapel. I was contemplating (not for the first time) the hideous bulk of it when a man (another stranger !) asked me, in that in-

appropriate time and place, where the Billiards Hall was. I could not satisfy this query, but surmised it might be in the High Street, where the public-houses and the kinema palaces, and all the other vanities mostly are gathered together. He said, "No; it is in some alley near-by." With that he went in search of it. When, a little later,

STATUE OF JOHN BUNYAN, BEDFORD, BY SIR J. E. BOEHM.

I passed round by St. Cuthbert's and the Howard House, there indeed was the Billiards Hall, and the enquiring person disappearing into it. "And," as Bunyan would put it, in his *Pilgrim's Progress*, "I saw him no more." I am quite sure Bunyan would not have approved of billards, but I advance no implications.

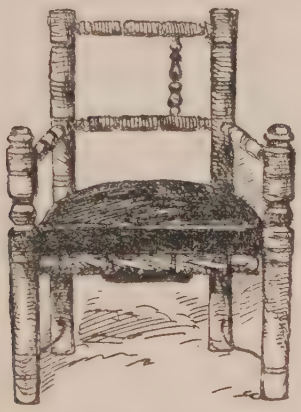
Well, now you perceive that not everyone in Bedford knows where the Bunyan Meeting is situated. I was surprised, and—yes—a little

grieved, too. But I am more grieved at the odious quality of that building. I do not wish, in my turn, to grieve others ; but surely this is a terribly disappointing structure. I must needs confess that, while the associations and history of it engage all my sympathies, the manner of this building—one dare not say the "architecture" of it—is disheartening and depressing. To me, in its great unimaginative, pagan-looking bulk of bastard classicism, it is inexcusable, save for the knowledge that it is an example of what was done everywhere at the time of its building. To me it is unworthy of holding the memories of the religious struggles that brought it into being. I would have, in its stead, since we cannot have back the old original "Ruffhead's Barn," where the members of the Bedford Church met and worshipped so simply and sincerely, something beautiful and inspiring ; something in that joyous spirit of Early English architecture, which seems in itself a prayer, an aspiration towards that which is good. Would that seem, in the Bunyan outlook, "the pride of the eye ?"

The name often applied to this building, the "Old Meeting," although not at all misleading in Bedford, easily may be to people elsewhere. It is so called because of the split in 1772, when, owing to the then minister developing Baptist leanings, John Howard and others seceded, and formed the "New Meeting."

To the "Old Meeting" building in 1876 were added, as a gift from Francis, ninth Duke of Bedford, the heavy bronze doors, with illustrative panels by Thrupp, representing ten scenes from *The Pilgrim's Progress*. They are not good art, but in 1876 they were greatly admired. The Howard House, bought by Howard, as a convenient place of rest when he came into Bedford on Sundays from his residence at Cardington, is, together with the rooms forming part of the "Old Meeting,"

a museum of Bunyan and Dissenting Church relics and records. In the Chapel entrance is the heavy old barred and grated door of the county gaol, and in the room where are gathered copies of all the works of Bunyan, from his first, *Some*



BUNYAN'S CHAIR.

Gospel Truths, of 1656, to his last sermon, preached in London, in 1688, is his chair, a survival from the original vestry. It is now a very decrepit article of furniture, and not improved by having had its legs shortened for the use of a minister of lesser stature than Bunyan himself. A brass rail, fixed between the arms of it, prevents any disaster likely to happen by anyone sitting upon this historic chair.

Two more personal articles belonging to Bunyan are kept here: a jug of a peculiarly beautiful blue and cream coloured stoneware which seems in his time to have been made in Bedfordshire; and an inlaid cabinet. Recently there have been added the old wooden belfry door from Elstow Church, and the pulpit from Zoar Chapel, Southwark, from which occasionally he preached. This came into possession of the Sunday School Union,

some years ago, and has been presented by that body.

Here too, is the original conveyance of Ruff-head's Barn and the orchard in which it stood ; the site, as already detailed in these pages, of the "Old Meeting" itself. Portraits gaze upon the visitor from these walls ; among them that of that personage so inimical to Bunyan at the Sessions in Bedford, when being examined before the justices, Sir John Kelynge, Chairman of the Bench. He glances forth in a stern and uncompromising fashion.

The place is indeed a very treasure-house of Bunyan interest, and deserves to be more widely known.

CHAPTER XIV

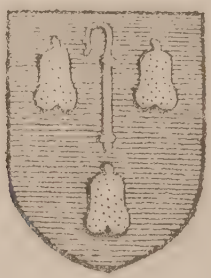
Trend of religious thought in Bedfordshire and adjacent shires—Warden Abbey—Sawtry Abbey—"Benefit of Clergy" and growth of education—The "Martin Marprelate" tracts—The "Protestant Nunnery" at Little Gidding

ANY history of religion in Bedfordshire that may come to be written would be incomplete, when dealing with its monasteries, without some account of the Cistercian Abbey of Warden, which was situated some six miles south-east of Bedford, hard by the village of Old Warden. The Abbey of De Sartis, as originally it was named, founded in 1135 by Walter l'Espec, who was the founder also of the greater Cistercian monastery of Rievaulx in Yorkshire, took its name from the clearing amidst the woods in which it was situated. The Cistercians, no scholars, were something better. They were the farmers and the cultivators who made the waste places blossom and bring forth fruit. Here at Warden they became from small beginnings a very prosperous body, the richest in Bedfordshire, largely because of their skill as farmers and fruit-growers. Indeed they adopted for the arms of the Abbey the device of three golden pears on a blue ground; alluding to the once famous "Warden" pears which they had introduced. Like those once celebrated apples the "Ribston pippins," Warden pears are things of the past. They were pears for baking. Warden pies formed a favourite old English dish, and are the subject of allusion in the Ingoldsby Legend of "Nell Cook":

A Warden's pie's a dainty dish
To mortify withal.

Until about the middle of the nineteenth century there still were numerous trees of Warden pears in Bedfordshire, and "hot baked Wardens" were then sold in winter in Bedford streets. Of the Abbey only some tumbled mounds and a red brick building, which may have been a portion of the Abbot's lodging, remain. The Abbey Farm stands on part of the site. In its garden remains one solitary Warden pear-tree, still in bearing.

Thus the old religious were of some practical use in the world, unlike those that followed them



THE ARMS OF WARDEN ABBEY.

as the elect of the State, fulfilling the useless part of the barren fig-tree, producing nothing and cumbering the ground.

There was in the old times, in the adjacent shire of Huntingdon, the Abbey of St. Mary at Sawtry, on the Great North Road, between Alconbury and Stilton; a Cistercian monastery supplied from Warden. Being situated directly upon a great and much-travelled highway, Sawtry Abbey gave alms and shelter to more wayfarers than perhaps any Abbey in England, in times when road-making, bridge-building, and the succouring of travellers of every degree were works of piety regarded as matters of course in all conventual establishments. It was less wealthy than the Abbeys of Peterborough, Thorney, and

Crowland, but, according to the old rhyme:

> Sawtry by the Waye, that old Abbaye,
> Gave more alms in one day than all they.

That Abbey was dissolved, in common with all others, in the time of Henry the Eighth, and not one stone of it remains on the site where it stood.

REMAINS OF WARDEN ABBEY.

As with the other monastic foundations, it had outlived its day and usefulness. The time had come when it was not needed for the help of genuine travellers, and it encouraged mendicants, those who were styled in the language of the age as "masterless men" and "sturdy beggars."

There were, however, those other Abbeys which had come to serve no useful purpose: those that were wealthy and grasping; owning market-

rights and great manors; exacting and harsh landlords, with arrogant pretensions. They and the clergy were privileged from of old, when learning resided only in their class; when by a "clerk" was meant one who could write and only the clergy—those who could perform the clerical work of writing—could express themselves on paper. By pleading "benefit of clergy"; proving that he could write, a malefactor might escape the due penalty of his crime, while an unlettered criminal would be hanged. When the pious King Henry the Sixth founded in the fifteenth century his "College of the Blessed St. Mary" at Eton, and when the Bishop of Winchester, William of Wykeham, founded New College, Oxford, and his school at Winchester, they, with others, eager to spread education, did not realize that they were but incidents in a process by which in course of time most men could come to the arts of reading and writing, by which thought was set free, to the ultimate overthrow of things that they in their age held most dear.

Henry the Eighth was himself but an incident in the irresistible march of evolution, praised though he be by some, and reviled by others. Cardinal Wolsey had already shown him the way by suppressing for his own ends numerous religious houses. Even had they not existed, others in their stead would have done much the same.

While it might be too much to declare that those Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and Huntingdonshire regions were more given over to Nonconformity than any other part of England in the seventeenth century, it is certain that here those independent religious communities were exceptionally numerous and well-supported.

Very early they took root, largely in the furious agitation in the reign of Queen Elizabeth against the High Church pretensions of the Bishops of the

Established Church; a Church established on what was held to be a statesmanlike compromise. Like all compromises, it satisfied nobody. Whether Elizabeth's advisers could have done better in those unsettled times it is not the province of these pages to argue; but there the fact remains. Nothing could have brought peace, short of a complete severance of Church and State; in which every man could choose his own form of worship. One of the most fruitful sources of Nonconformist growth was the Martin Marprelate series of pamphlets in which John Penry took a leading part. Penry, a scholar of Peterhouse, Cambridge, developed Puritan leanings, and viewed with abhorrence the vestments, the genuflexions, and the sacerdotal pretensions of many of the clergy, and he was supported largely by those clergy who had been deprived of their livings because they also could not follow these practices. In common with most other dissenters, he did not believe in the division of clerical and lay members of a Church. The "Martin Marprelate" tracts, owing to the laws of that time which required publications to be licensed, and prohibited such criticisms of the State Church, had thus to be issued from secret printing-presses, established where they safely might be. The first press was at Molesey, near Kingston-on-Thames, in 1587. In the following year it was removed to Fawsley, in Northamptonshire, between Banbury and Daventry, to the old manor-house of the Knightleys; Sir Richard Knightley, a sympathizer, affording Penry and his printers an asylum. Sir Richard Knightley, himself of strong Puritan sympathies, had in his youth been wild and dissolute, but now he had, in the words of some lines on his portrait, still at Fawsley, reached that "blissful shore" to which mighty Jove had "brought his barke."

The violence of the "Marprelate" tracts, and the equal scurrility and abuse of the replies printed by the prelatical adherents are equally extreme. They set all England reading and arguing; and sent the authorities questing here, there, and everywhere for the press that sent forth the attacks on Episcopacy. Penry, already known for his anti-clerical attitude, was known to be the prime mover; and was in danger of arrest. At Fawsley, therefore, he attired himself in a disguise which must have been extrenely repugnant to one of his habit of mind and conduct. He went in the highest of fashion; with a light-coloured hat, a sky-blue cloak, with collar of embroidery and gold and silver lace, and a sword at his side. It was ill seeking such a man in such a guise. But, even so, Fawsley soon became too dangerous as a refuge. The only safety for the continuance of that obnoxious press was to remove it from place to place. It was then set up at Norton, at Haseley, the seat of Job Throckmorton, one of the Throckmortons who, exceptionally, were not Roman Catholics, and at Manchester; and the tracts continued to pour forth.

The historic mansion of Fawsley, this seat of the Knightleys, dates back in part to the fifteenth century, and is neighboured in the park by the old Dower House, last inhabited in 1704, and now a picturesque ruin. In the nursery of the Manor House, then, were printed for a time these tracts which had so great a part in that Puritan movement which was in the course of the next sixty years utterly to overthrow the existing order of things in England.

Penry later fled into Scotland, where he fulminated against Queen Elizabeth's ministers and the Bishops, as "Conspirators against God; a troop of bloody evil murderers." Returning to England, he was arrested and thrown into prison.

He was an embarrassing prisoner, and several of the clergy were sent to argue with him, and, if it might be, to persuade him, but without effect. The Government did not dare put him to death ostensibly for his religious views, and so a pretext was found in some phrases used by him in Scotland, by which he was condemned as a seditious person, seeking to overturn the Queen's authority. Penry was hanged on May 29th, 1593, at a water-

LITTLE GIDDING CHURCH.

splash known as " St. Thomas à Watering," which then crossed the Dover Road at the point where St. Thomas Road joins the Old Kent Road. That was a place of ignominy, where the cut-throats, the footpads, and other criminals then expiated their crimes.

Not only the nonconforming bodies were active in Bedfordshire and the surrounding districts in the years following the Martin Marprelate period.

There were those of the opposite sort; scattered communities within the Church of England like that of Little Gidding, technically within the Establishment, but not in spirit with it. The country people, the simple peasants, looked with grave doubts upon these bodies of reactionaries, and called them, in their rustic way, "Papishes." There was ample excuse for them in so styling such a community as that set up at Little Gidding.

This was settled at that place in 1625, by Nicholas Ferrar. That was the opening year of Charles the First's reign, when the High Church party became again aggressive; with what results history tells us, in sombre tones. Little Gidding, some five miles north of Huntingdon, in what we may style the "Cromwell Country," would not appear to be a very promising part of England in which to found what was styled a "Protestant Nunnery." It was an unfortunate name; for the neighbourhood thought it more "Nunnery" than "Protestant."

Nicholas Ferrar was little more than thirty when he settled at Little Gidding. He was a man of wealth, the son of a City of London merchant-adventurer, and had been educated at Clare College, Cambridge, where he had a reputation for piety and learning. Later he was interested in the affairs of the Virginia colony, but on the Charter of the company to which that colony belonged, being abrogated by James the First, he returned to England, and for a time represented Lymington in Parliament. Soon, however, he determined to relinquish all public affairs. Purchasing the manor of Little Gidding, he prevailed upon practically all his kin to join him there, in a religious community of advanced views. The mansion, then extremely large, was falling into decay, and the small church, in its grounds, some forty yards distant, had become a barn. In a few

weeks he took up residence, with his mother, and secured Deacon's Orders, authorizing him to take duty in the church. His mother already had enthusiastically cleaned and repaired the church, before even the house had been put in order. They then were joined by his brother John, his sister and her husband, and sixteen children, and others. In all there were some forty persons. The household rose at five in the morning, and in the summer an hour earlier. At nine there was a religious service in the church; at half-past ten the vicar of Steeple Gidding conducted another; evensong was at two, and at eight everyone retired to bed. In addition, the whole of the Psalms was read, every day. In the not very great space of time left after these strenuous observances, the community occupied themselves with the "Harmonies of the Gospels" and the Psalms. These were not musical compositions, but selected passages cut out and rearranged. Book-binding was a craft also followed; and elaborate needlework; while Virginia Ferrar cultivated silkworms. The church alone did not content them; Ferrar fitted up a domestic oratory in the house, with two other separate oratories; one for the men and the other for the women.

The Church was rebuilt and the oak seats arranged lengthwise, the whole length of the building, in the manner of choir stalls. The brass font is shaped something like a tulip.

The fame of this community soon spread. The Bishop of Lincoln visited it in 1631 and "wished there were many more such in the Church and Kingdom." In 1633, Charles the First paid the "Protestant nunnery" a visit, on his way to Scotland, and on subsequent occasions. Nicholas Ferrar died in 1637, from the severity of his religious observances, and his nephew, later, from a like cause. On his hurried journey to Scotland

in 1646, King Charles bethought him of his High Church friends at Little Gidding, and they secreted him in a farmhouse at the hamlet of Copmanford, some three miles north. It would not have been safe to have him in the manor-house of Little Gidding, for the community was raided now and again; the house ransacked, the church organ

THE RECTORY, LEIGHTON BROMESWOLD:
ORIGINALLY THE GATEHOUSE OF THE CLIFTON MANSION.

broken up for firewood, and the brass lectern thrown into a pond.

J. H. Shorthouse, in his novel, *John Inglesant*, has given a picture of the Little Gidding "nunnery."

Besides his rebuilt church here, Nicholas Ferrar, with the celebrated George Herbert of Bemerton, was responsible for the rebuilding and arrangement of the church of Leighton Bromeswold, near Kimbolton.

Leighton Bromeswold is an interesting place. The living is a rectory, but there was not until recent years any adequate rectory-house. Some thirty years ago the question of providing one came up, when the Ecclesiastical Commissioners purchased the deserted gatehouse of a demolished mansion of the Cliftons, an imposing structure built in 1616 by Sir Gervase Clifton, first Lord Clifton. The building was repaired and remodelled and a very fine and dignified residence it makes conveniently near the church, on the north side. The Cliftons of Leighton Bromeswold ended with Theodosia, in the fourth generation after Sir Gervase Clifton, who in 1608 was created Baron Clifton. Theodosia Clifton married the first Earl of Darnley, and thus was merged into that title. It reappeared, however, as a separate peerage when the seventh Earl of Darnley died in 1900, leaving an only daughter, born the same year. The Earldom went to his brother. The Barony, as a Barony by writ, devolved upon the daughter, who is Baroness Clifton in her own right ; the seventeenth holder of the title.

The stranger who for the first time enters the church of Leighton Bromeswold will be astonished to see there two pulpits, of identical size and design; one on either side of the chancel-arch. The mystery of this—for a mystery it will be to most people—is explained by a reference to Izaak Walton's *Life of George Herbert,* whose first incumbency was here from 1626. Walton calls the place " Layton Ecclesia," and says the church was at that time in a ruinous condition ; the greater part " fallen down, and that of it which stood was so decayed, and so little and so useless that parishioners could not meet to perform their duty to God, in public prayer and praise ; and thus it had been for almost twenty years, in which time there had been some faint endeavours for a public

collection to enable the parishioners to rebuild it, but with no success till Mr. Herbert undertook it; and he by his own and the contributions of many of his kindred and other noble friends, undertook the re-edification of it." And further: "By his orders, the reading-pew and the pulpit were a little distant from each other, and both of an equal

THE TWO PULPITS, LEIGHTON BROMESWOLD CHURCH.

height; for he would often say, 'They should neither have a precedency or priority of the other; but that prayers and preaching, being equally useful, might agree like brethren, and have an equal honour and estimation.'"

The same practice was subsequently followed by Nicholas Ferrar, at Little Gidding in the same shire, and in other churches; but the two no longer remain in other places than Leighton Bromeswold.

The doings of the community at Little Gidding, however obnoxious their principles may have been to the general feeling in the country, did not really concern any but themselves, for they were self-

contained, and their little church, although technically parochial, was in effect a private chapel. But the temper of those times was such that every side was imbued with something of the persecuting spirit, while only some lacked the opportunity of exercising it ; and so the Ferrars' society was not allowed to continue in the land. Their place was wrecked and themselves dispersed.

CHAPTER XV

In Bunyan's Bedfordshire

DID any full record of John Bunyan's many years of preaching exist, it would be found that, very literally, obeying the injunction to " go into the highways and hedges and call them in," his life largely consisted in travelling into the rural parts of Bedfordshire and the adjacent shires and addressing rural communities. There are no records of many excursions very far afield in his ministry. The town of Reading in the west, that of Leicester northwards, and London in the south would seem to set his extreme boundaries.

Widely around Elstow and Bedford, the country still is teeming with Bunyan traditions and with tales of the difficulties with which that itinerating was beset. Even in the Commonwealth days these enterprises were regarded with disfavour, curiously alternating with an open-hearted welcome.

When, in the first years of Charles the Second, the informers were busy with spying upon the " meeters "—in Bunyan's own phrase—the covert assemblies met, as did others, like the Quakers, in remote and silent places, little likely to be discovered ; but the informers, seeking a pestilent livelihood in the award of a half of the fines imposed, were everywhere. Bunyan does not forget them in his writings. There is, for example, in his *Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, the story of one " W.S." who kept watch of nights and spied upon the " meeters." This was a real person, one William Swinton, sexton of St. Cuthbert's, in

Bedford town. The trade of informer could be a lucrative one. Such as they often received upwards of £8, upon a conviction under the Conventicle Act ; and there is to be seen in the Public Record Office a spy-book for Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, neatly arranged as a kind of

"BUNYAN'S CHIMNEY," COLMAN'S GREEN.

incriminating alphabetical local gazetteer and directory.

At Gamlingay, Ashwell, Hitchin, Royston, Baldock, and many another place, Bunyan was well known.

Among the places most intimately remembered by the country folk as those in which Bunyan preached was Dallow Farm, on the outskirts of

Luton. "Was," it is sorrowfully to be said, for that old farmhouse was demolished, rather wantonly, in 1913, and a smug suburban road now runs there. Breachwood Green, near Luton, Ippollitts, near Hitchin, and Wainwood Dell, two miles south of Hitchin, are other places associated with the gatherings under the trees in storm or shine, winter and summer. Wainwood Dell is better known to the people of Hitchin as "Bunyan's Dell." There, near the hamlet of Preston, in a cup-like hollow, on whose wooded rim scouts were placed to keep watch, Bunyan preached and an earnest congregation listened, never knowing when the magistrates and their officers might descend upon them. A keeper's cottage adjacent has still in its older part an ingle-nook where Bunyan, by tradition, sat, with a tiny cupboard where he kept his Bible.

At Pulloxhill, in a field, is "Bunyan's Mount." Southwards, a little way short of Hatfield, in the parish of Sandridge, is the hamlet of Colman's Green, where, until recent years, there stood three old cottages, one of which was associated with Bunyan. They have been demolished, except for the gable-end and chimney of one, known for a long distance round as "Bunyan's Chimney." This sturdy relic of red brick bears a small tablet inscribed "John Bunyan is said by tradition to have preached, and occasionally to have lodged, in the cottage of which this chimney is a part."

If we seek to know what kind of places were those farmhouses in which dwelt sympathizers with Bunyan and the Dissenting Church, we shall still find many venerable houses of that quality in all these parts. If we track along, just north of Luton to the hamlet of Limbury, there will be found, close by where the river Lea takes its rise, on the southern side of the Chiltern Hills, the old Moat Farm. The infant waters of the Lea are

made to form a broad moat to this farm, which is perhaps unique in possessing not only that security, but also the additional one of being enclosed within a range of very old barns and outhouses forming a complete square. When the gates to the yawning gateway of these buildings are closed, you have the house itself, standing within the inner defence of

MOAT FARM, LIMBURY.

its moat, cut off entirely from without, in the midst of a grassy space forming a kind of courtyard.

The place-name, "Limbury," refers to the river Lea. It is "Lea-bury," just as Luton is "Lea-town."

The Luton meeting, held in Bunyan's time at Dallow Farm, was numerously attended, and continued to flourish increasingly after his time.

Luton, indeed, was ever strong in Nonconformity ; and gave much cause for heart-searchings among the Church of England people. There is in Luton parish church a curious epitaph on one, Daniel Knight, 1756, which after this long lapse of time cannot be explained :

> Here lieth the body of Daniel Knight
> Who all my lifetime lived in spite
> Base flatterers sought me to undoe
> And bade me sign what was not true
> Reader, take care, whene'er you venture
> To trust a canting false Dissenter.

See how these Christians love one another !

In the level plain of Bedfordshire, the Chiltern Hills, stretching across the shire from end to end—between east and west—along its southern borders, form a notable feature. Those hills, the "Delectable Mountains," continue for many miles beyond Bedfordshire, at either end. They are always beautiful, ever varying in outline, and often send forth spurs or parallel ranges. Interesting though it would be to trace the Chilterns from end to end, and to follow throughout the prehistoric Icknield Way, which runs along them, on their northern side, we must needs here speak only of that part of the range which, entering Bedfordshire on its western border at Edlesborough and continuing to Dunstable leaves the shire some four miles north-east of Luton.

Some latitude may, however, be allowed on entering and leaving Bedfordshire, for a county boundary is an imaginary line, rarely marked by any feature of physical geography ; and it will be convenient to trace the Chilterns in this part of their course by coming to them by way of Tring, in the adjoining Buckinghamshire. Just north of Tring the Icknield Way is found, running on four miles to Ivinghoe, that pleasant village with the beautiful name which so attracted the notice of

Sir Walter Scott that he adopted it (with a slight variation in spelling) for that of his hero, Ivanhoe. There stands a great church, with old fire-hooks, once kept in the church itself, hanging on the churchyard wall. These fire-hooks or "thatch-anchors," as often they were called, are massive iron hooks mounted on heavy poles, fifteen or more feet in length. They were used in olden times when thatched roofs were usual, and not, as now, the exception, for pulling off the entire roof of a burning house or cottage. Gangs of men,

IVINGHOE CHURCH.

carrying poles of this description, went to the scene of the fire, and, hooking the eaves, and pulling with all their might, usually succeeded in bringing off the whole roof. To aid them in getting a hold, there were provided in some parts, very noticeably in Cambridgeshire, iron rings attached to the wall-plate.

The second half in the place-name "Ivinghoe," evidently refers to that great height under whose shadow the village very nearly is situated: the

impressive hill of Ivinghoe Beacon, rising to 809 feet, and with a weird peaked top that renders it unmistakable in every view. Hence the Icknield Way runs along the shoulders of the Chilterns, as a very well-kept modern road, going unfenced all the way through Dunstable to Luton and beyond. The country it passes through is all in the nature of chalk downs, with short, springy grass of the kind known as " rabbit turf." On the right you look up along to the hills, and on the left down into the vale. In some three miles from Ivinghoe, Bedfordshire is entered, at a point which deserves every attention. It is where a deep hollow runs up close to the left hand side of the road, which is here protected by a railing. The hollow, its sides all in their natural grassy condition, spreads out and then contracts to what we may style a " bottle-neck," forming a sort of roughly-shaped arena, wholly the work of nature. Prehistoric man, however, put it to a specific use. He made of this a cattle-pound, closing in the entrance at will, with limbs of trees, or other rude fencing.

From this point of view the eye ranges over the vale towards Leighton Buzzard, with the church of Edlesborough in the middle distance ; a church built within the earthen ramparts of a prehistoric camp, still enclosing the churchyard.

Passing the " Travellers' Rest " inn at the cross-roads, we come at length into Dunstable. Across that town, the Icknield Way goes lonely, in another five miles, into Luton, the town of straw-plaiting and hat-making, and in these latter years of engineering establishments. The Chiltern Hills have here become rather more of a region than a mere range ; for, turning at Luton northwards to Barton-le-Clay, it is a distance of six miles across them. They here partake even more of the character of rolling chalk downs, across which runs

PREHISTORIC POUND ON THE ICKNIELD WAY.

the exposed Luton and Bedford road, passing only the almost derelict church of Streatley, four miles out, before reaching the long descent to Barton-le-Clay. Along the older road to the right at this point is a solitary tree : an oak having the appearance of being about two centuries old called " Jeremiah's Tree." It is a landmark for long distances ; and is marked and so-named on Ordnance maps. The history of " Jeremiah's Tree " has escaped the diligent enquiries of the

" JEREMIAH'S TREE."

present writer. No one knows who was Jeremiah ; although the obvious surmises are offered : that he was a highwayman, a murderer, a suicide. It is a wide choice.

Barton-le-Clay nestles at the foot of that part of the Chilterns known as the Barton Hills. The church lies in a by-way of the considerable, but scattered, village, and the rectory stands within a moat. A former industry, that of digging for caprolites, which brought much prosperity to the place, is now a thing of the past. The place-name is always wrongly spelled, if we take account

of its meaning, which has nothing to do with clay. It is properly Barton-le-Clee, or "le Clive"; meaning Barton under the cliff, or hill.

Eastward from Barton the road goes to Hitchin, in six miles, with the great earthwork-crested hill of Ravensburgh Castle on the way. Westwards the noble height of Sharpenhoe rises, clothed with woods, the steep chalky Moleskin Hill running up it, to join the Luton road. Three miles onward, along this westerly road past Sharpenhoe, after

GRANGE MILL.

passing a picturesque old flour-mill, the hills are seen to have died down into the levels beyond Harlington, where the little river Flit flows through its meadows, past Westoning, Flitwick, and Flitton.

Northwards we come again to the ridge forming the watershed between the Flit Valley and the larger vale of Ouse, and re-passing Millbrook, return to Bedford by way of Marston Morteyne. On the left hand side of the road, three miles out of Millbrook, after passing the railway level-crossing at Millbrook station (which is situated on the lonely roadside, half-an-hour's walk from Mill-

SHARPENHOE.

brook), is a small, unpretending house not in the least likely to be noticed by the casual wayfarer, now that it is no longer an inn.

The old beliefs in the supernatural held by the rustics—and even by many educated people—in the age of Bunyan, and fully shared by him, are aptly illustrated in the story of this house, which now is a farmhouse, but was until 1920, a wayside inn called "The Jumps." The licence has now been surrendered and the house has retired into private

HOUSE FORMERLY THE "JUMPS" INN.

life; so that it seems likely the legend belonging to this spot may be forgotten. But while the house remained an inn, few there were who passed by that could resist entering and enquiring the reason for the odd sign. That was all to the good of trade.

It seems then that if referred to a fearful old Bedfordshire legend of those times when no kind of secular amusement was thinkable on Sundays. There were even then, however, some reckless people who dared play games on the Sabbath, taking all risks; and here some young men were playing "leap-frog" in the meadow opposite where the house now stands. They were thor-

oughly enjoying their impious sport when a stranger appeared among them and offered to show them better how to jump. It seems that they did not much care for this sporting offer. Perhaps they were conscience-striken and suspicious. But at any rate, the stranger forthwith made three marvellous jumps of quite superhuman lengths, whose limits, marked by mounds, used to be pointed out.

The young men, alarmed at this miraculous athletic exhibition, and suspecting the real nature of their sporting friend, tried to escape, but the stranger seized them, and all disappeared in a light blue flame, over the church of Marston Morteyne. We know, of course, who that was !

Few, or no, legends grow up without some excuse or basis in actual happenings ; and it may be suggested that no devil appeared, to make away with the youths ; but that they probably were caught in a violent thunderstorm and killed ; which itself, in the views commonly held in those times, would have been a " judgment " for playing games on the holy day. The base of an ancient cross is to be seen in the meadow, marking one of the " jumps." The real reason of the cross has not been determined, but it may be surmised that it marked the limits of land at one time belonging to Elstow Abbey.

Of such were the olden Bedfordshire superstitions. They lived long, nor yet are they quite extinct. Still it is possible, in the imagination of the Bedfordshire rustics, to be " overlooked " in the ill-wishing way, by some wielder of black magic. Some few years since, in digging a grave in the churchyard at the east end of St. Paul's Church, Bedford, the skeleton was unearthed of one who had been buried about 1820. A farthing was found, wired on to the teeth. Why ? To pay the fare of the deceased at Charon's ferry across

the dark river. And it is likely enough that the same thing occasionally is done now.

But you must live in Bedfordshire to come to a full knowledge of these things; the countryfolk are shy of revealing their ancient dark beliefs to strangers; and those who are not their neighbours and well in their confidence are never likely to hear much of these survivals, save through the medium of some stray newspaper paragraph recording quaint incidents arising out of them.

CHAPTER XVI

In Bunhill Fields

WHEN the good man's course was run and he died at the house of his friend, Mr. Strudwick, on Snow Hill, in the City of London, there was no choice but to lay him to rest in London itself; not where his relatives and dearest friends —and ourselves in this age—would wish his body to lie, among his own nearest, at Elstow or at Bedford. Conveyance was not in those times altogether an easy affair, and, therefore, rather than convey the body of John Bunyan those rather less than fifty miles, it was arranged that the funeral should be at Bunhill Fields, without the City's walls, in the vault belonging to the Strudwick family.

And there, to this day, you may see the tomb of John Bunyan, amidst that very forest of headstones, some grey, some blackened, and others bleached by the freaks of weather, for many generations past. Many are the distinguished who have been buried in this great City of London graveyard of the Dissenters; but few are the outstanding monuments to them; and that to Bunyan is the most prominent; as we like to think it should be. It is a lofty altar tomb on which reclines his figure, sculptured in stone. The manner of it is after those altar-tombs which commonly we find in churches, and we have some difficulty in reconciling our minds to the idea of such an one, with its recumbent effigy, being exposed to the grime and the weathering of the open air. However, here it is; restored in 1862, with "the good" Lord Shaftesbury prominent in

that work of preservation, as an inscription on it states. It is kept painted ; not an ideal way of treating stone sepulchral effigies, but necessary if they are to be maintained in the open air.

It has been said by Macaulay that this spot where Bunyan lies "is still regarded by the Nonconformists which seems scarcely in harmony with the stern spirit of their theology. Many Puritans to whom the respect paid by Roman Catholics to the reliques and tombs of their saints seemed childish or sinful are said to have begged with their dying breath that their coffins might be placed as near as possible to the coffin of the author of *The Pilgrim's Progress.*"

The history of this great graveyard of Bunhill Fields is interesting. Anciently the land formed a part of the manor of Finsbury Farm, and was one of three fields named respectively " Bonhill Field," " Mallow Field," and " High Field " : the last-named being of old described as " a meadow land where the three windmills stand, commonly called Finsbury Field." A memory of those windmills is found to-day in the name of Windmill Street.

This area of land lies beyond Moorgate and Finsbury Square, at the opening of the City Road, immediately past the barracks of the Honourable Artillery Company, and opposite Wesley's Chapel, The other fields ages ago were built over, but Bonhill Field, with an area of a little over twenty-three acres was about the middle of the seventeenth century leased to one Tindal, for a burying-ground, in the interests of the Dissenters, who objected to being buried with the service of the Book of Common Prayer. Thus Bunhill Fields became, in the words of Anthony à Wood, " the fanatical burying-place called by some ' Tyndal's burying place'."

From 1665 until 1832, when the ground was

closed, no fewer than 123,000 interments took place here, although only some five thousand tombs now are to be seen, owing chiefly to decay and lack of upkeep. For many years after its closing as a place of interment, Bunhill Fields was not accessible; and indeed at one time the place was in danger of being sold and the bodies removed. It was due chiefly to the exertions of Sir Charles Reed, at one time a member of the Court of Common Council of the City of London, and for some years Member of Parliament for Hackney, that the place not merely was saved, but that it was rescued from a dreadful state of neglect, and opened to the public October 14th, 1869. In this "opening"—by which is meant a right of way through, during the day time, and access by paths to interesting spots—none of that modern desecration and displacement of tombstones which is now so common a practice, in the interest of "open spaces" and "playgrounds," was permitted. A very little attempt at beautification has been made, in the way of planting a few flower-beds; and trees and shrubs have grown to modest dimensions, but Bunhill Fields remains essentially the same. It was closed before the era of marble crosses and broken pillars and the figures of beckoning angels—the stock-in-trade of the mortuary-masons—set in; and, therefore, though the place be grim, it is not vulgar. Nor is it so grim as once it was; although, to be sure, Bunhill Fields on a December, a January, or a February day is gloomy in the extreme. But on a spring day, when the sun is kindly, and the trees and shrubs are again putting forth their leaves, there is that amid the tombs which heartens the believer; and confirms him in the promise of the resurrection and the life everlasting.

The inscriptions on most of these stones may in the course of time moulder away, since in the main

the families specifically interested in them must pass out of existence, but every inscription was copied, years ago, and all are preserved in the Guildhall Library.

Near the tomb of John Bunyan are the altar-tombs of a number of the Commonwealth notables: Henry, Richard, and William Cromwell. That of General Fleetwood, who married Bridget Cromwell, widow of the sour and gloomy Ireton, is close by the entrance.

JOHN BUNYAN'S TOMB, BUNHILL FIELDS.

Here, too, is the grave of Susannah Wesley, widow of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, rector of Epworth in Lincolnshire, and mother of nineteen children of whom John and Charles Wesley (Charles was the first man ever to be called a "Methodist") are best known. But her epitaph states that John was "under God, the founder of the societies of the people called Methodists." The explanation is that although John Wesley founded the "societies," his brother Charles was already found by him, when he visited Oxford,

being styled a "methodist" by his fellow-collegians, on his having instituted in college Bible readings and prayer-meetings on a specific plan.

No fewer than three hundred notable early Nonconformist divines and teachers are buried here. Well might Southey style this "the Campo Santo of the Dissenters." To recall their names and the acts they wrought would be to write a history of Independency.

A polished granite obelisk, erected of late years records the burial here of one who in his secular way wrote a book as famous as Bunyan's great work. Daniel Defoe (or De Foe, as sometimes his name is spelled) author of *Robinson Crusoe* and innumerable other writings, died in 1731. With a strange and gross carelessness, his name was entered in the burial-register: "1731, April 6, Mr. Dubow, Cripplegate." A year later, when his second wife died, they came a little nearer to accuracy: "Dec. 19, 1732, Mrs. Dufow, Stoke Newington."

That famous hymn-writer, Dr. Isaac Watts, lies here. He died in 1748. A more critical age, and one more sensitive than his own, does not now greatly approve of Dr. Watts's hymns.

Beside one of the most frequented paths in this place is the stone marking the spot where William Blake the visionary poet and painter, "the man who saw angels on the window-sill" of his lodgings in Broad Street, Soho—an unlikely place for the Shining Ones, except to a visionary—lies. He died in 1827; and the centenary was celebrated by restoring this stone. His own generation considered him to be a madman: there are those in our own time who account him a genius, and there be yet others who believe the terms to be convertible.

But, however distinguished for piety, or in

history, or for genius may be those who lie in Bunhill Fields burying-ground, there can be no doubt that the one in whom the crowds who pass this way are most interested was one who was neither exceptionally pious by repute, and who certainly was not distinguished. This was one Dame Mary Page, "relict of Sir Gregory Page," who died in 1728. The inscription on her imposing tomb informs us, in gigantic lettering, that "In 67 months she was tapped 66 times, and had taken away 240 gallons of water, without ever repining at her case, or ever fearing the operation."

The bare ground, worn clear of grass, surrounding this tomb shows us that it is the centre of attraction, and that the dropsical lady has attained a kind of fame or curiosity that none other in this vast company can compete with.

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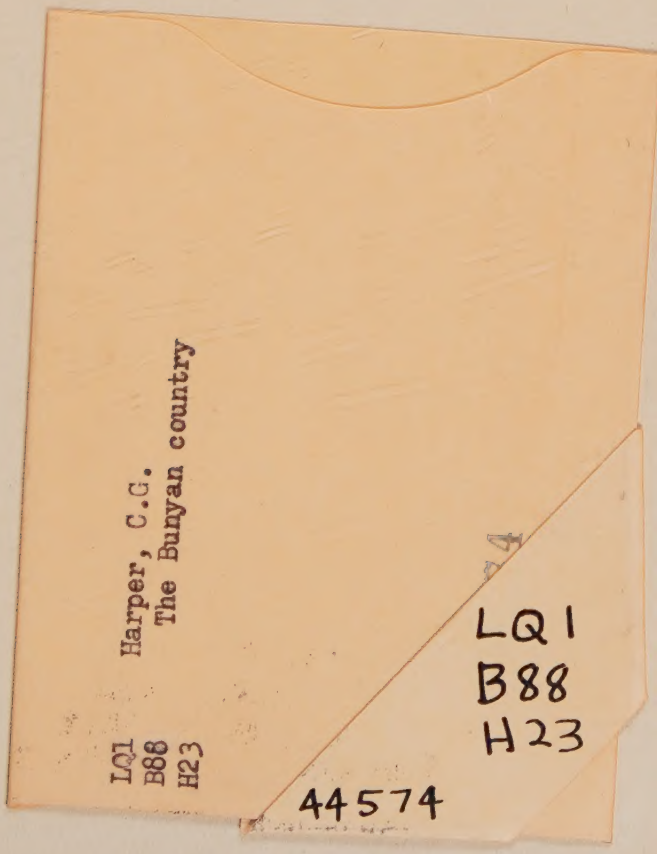
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